Reading Proclus and the *Book of Causes*
Volume 2

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Reading Proclus and the *Book of Causes* Volume 2

Translations and Acculturations

Edited by

Dragos Calma

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CHAPTER 1

Notes on the *Translations and Acculturations*

Dragos Calma
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This is the second of three volumes publishing the proceedings of the Parisian conference dedicated to the reception of the *Elements of Theology* and the *Book of Causes*. This meeting was dedicated mostly to the translations and various forms of acculturations of these two works in Byzantium, the Caucasus, the lands of Islam, the Latin West and the Jewish Western communities. I organised it in collaboration with the much-regretted Marc Geoffroy on 12–13 February 2016, within the framework of the project LIBER (ANR-13-PDOC-0018–01). The preparation for publication took a long time indeed, and its last stages were accomplished within the framework of a larger ERC project (NeoplAT_ERC_CoG_771640).

First and foremost, I wish to thank all the collaborators for their patience and their understanding during these years. I renew my gratitude toward the funding bodies that supported the organisation of these meetings: École pratique des hautes études, Équipe "Philosophie arabe" of the Centre "Jean Pépin"—CNRS (UMR 8230), Laboratoire d'études sur les monothéismes—CNRS (UMR 8584), Labex haStec (Laboratoire européen d'histoire et anthropologie des savoirs, des techniques et des croyances), Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes—CNRS, Centre "Pierre Abélard"—Université Paris Sorbonne. Equally, I wish to thank again Evan King and Liz Curry for their help in preparing this volume, Robert M. Berchman and John F. Finamore for accepting the publication of these volumes in their series; Jennifer Pavelko for her support; and the peer-reviewers for their effort and comments.

As for the first volume, minor rearrangements (compared to the original program) seemed necessary in order to strengthen the thematic coherence of the volume. Hence, Michael Chase's and Pascale Bermon's papers were delivered during the third meeting but are published in this volume, whereas Carlos Steel's paper will be published in the third volume. I am happy to welcome contributors invited to collaborate for this volume: Victoria Arroche, Anna Gioffreda, Sokrates-Athanasios Kiosoglou and Michele Trizio.

A summary of each section will provide more clarity.

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1 Byzantium

Frederick Lauritzen describes the multiple references to Proclus in Byzantium, such as the 6th-century anecdotical (and historically inaccurate) military advice allegedly provided to the emperor Anastasius, or the 10th-century remarks describing him as a plagiarist of Dionysius ps.-Areopagite. More interestingly, some of Maximus the Confessor's language echoes Proclus', notably when describing the immoveable and incorporeal realm of the divine. Lauritzen equally gives a list of correspondences between the works of Michael Psellos (published under the title *Philosophica Minora*) and Proclus' *Elements of Theology*. In the 14th century, Gregory Palamas, accused of being a Platonist by one of his adversaries, equally refers explicitly to Proclus (in *Contra Acyndinum*). Lauritzen even argues that the contemplation of the divine energies described by Palamas have echoes of the *Elements of Theology*, and stresses the continuity between Proclus, Maximus the Confessor, Michael Psellos and Gregory Palamas.

Lauritzen advocates that Pagan philosophy was studied in Byzantium "by a variety of thinkers rather than isolated circles of intellectuals" (p. 29). Proclus' *Elements of Theology* would be an example of this widespread influence, and Nicholas of Methone's critique attests to the presence of a veritable trend in the 12th century.

Stephen Gersh studies the influence of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* on Eustratios' theory of universals in the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* and in the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*. Gersh identifies incongruities between the ways Eustratios presents the universals in these two texts, with the latter text introducing the idea that the universal *before the parts* is not the Platonic transcendent form (like in the *Commentary on the Ethics*), but rather recalls an "originative monad or an unparticipated term" (p. 37). As a consequence, the two other universals (*of parts* and *in the parts*) have slightly different definitions inasmuch as the concepts of *parts* and *whole* are redefined relative to this principle: the "whole of parts" is the entire collection of monads proceeding from the originative monad, and the "whole in parts" is each individual monad within this collection.

Gersh identifies the sources in Proclus' *Elements of Theology* and the two prologues of the *Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*. Indeed, in prop. 67 of the *Elements of Theology*, Proclus presents the same tripartite distinction (*before the parts*, *of parts*, *in the part*), although not explicitly in relation to universals but to wholeness (ὁλότης). In the *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*, Proclus explicitly discusses a threefold division of universals, in

somewhat similar terms. Gersh shows that Eustratios does not simply combine these analogous theories, inasmuch as, for example, the whole of the parts does not correspond to any of the three universals, but more to a relation (that of genus and species). For Eustratios, mathematical and dialectical notions are inextricably linked. Gersh contributes to the debate on the status of universals in Eustratios (and Proclus) by underlying the role of cognitive faculties (intellection, discursive reason and opinion) in grasping the universal. He equally provides a close examination of the meaning of the word *logos* in Proclus' *Commentary on Euclid*, concluding that even the *Elements of Theology* "consists of propositions and proofs which exemplify the sense of *logos* as a combination of thinking + the one and the many in syllogistic argument" (p. 47). Eustratios' flexible use of *logos* seems, at times, similar to the Hellenic Neoplatonic tradition, but at other times more closely related to Christian Platonism.

Joshua M. Robinson focuses on Psellos' understanding of Proclus' metaphysics (mainly his views on emanation and on the unity of the One) in respect to the Christian teachings on creation and Trinity. He does not exclude the possibility that Nicholas of Methone wrote his *Refutation* as a reaction to Psellos' abundant use of Proclus. Robinson argues, contrary to Lauritzen, Gioffreda and Trizio, that there is no direct evidence for any substantial interest in Proclus in the 12th century (with the exception of Ioane Petritsi). The comparisons between the positions of Psellos and Nicholas are illuminating.

Robinson notes that one should not exaggerate the weight of Proclus in Psellos (comprising both abundant compilation of citations and very specific explanations) and mentions, for instance, that the number of references to Aristotle and Plotinus exceed the number of references to Proclus. In some cases, Proclus is simply the foremost representative of Hellenic thought and stands for Pagan wisdom as such. One should not conclude that by citing Proclus, Psellos intends to endorse all the views he reports, although in some cases he finds astonishing degrees of compatibility with the Trinitarian dogma (e.g. in prop. 35 of the *Elements*) or the Incarnation (e.g. in a quotation from *De sacrificio et magica*). There are cases where Psellos intentionally modifies Proclus' argument in order to render it compatible with Trinitarian doctrine: when dealing with prop. 7, he omits that, according to Proclus, within the hierarchy of gods, one cannot produce another equal to itself.

For Psellos, as Robinson points out, reason (λόγος) is equally important for Greeks (i.e. the Pagan Hellenic tradition) and Christians, yet the truth is rooted in revelation and tradition. By contrast, Nicholas "regards Proclus' entire project as a presumptuous rationalism aiming to scale the heavens (like the Tower of Babel) by the power of human thought" (p. 63). Robinson's careful examin-

ation of citations leads him to the conclusion that, contrary to a rather widely shared view among scholars, there are not that many occasions where Psellos agrees with Proclus, and "in some passages [he is] clearly conscious that philosophy can lead into heresy" (p. 89).

Anna Gioffreda and Michele Trizio revisit the question of the authenticity of Methone's *Refutation of Proclus' Elements of Theology*: two 14th-century manuscripts attribute chapters 139 and 146 of the work to Procopius of Gaza (ca 465/470–526/530). Indeed, there is a scholarly debate about the paternity of these fragments that has been recently revived by E. Amato (2010, 2014). In 2012, the same fragments have been ascribed to Ps-Procopius by I. Polemis in his edition of treatises attributed to the 14th-century author Isaak Argyros.

Gioffreda and Trizio refute Amato's arguments stating, as Lauritzen has in his contribution, that Proclus' *Elements of Theology* was widely known and read by 11th- and 12th-century Byzantine scholars. They equally recall the numerous internal evidence pleading in favour of a middle Byzantine dating. Among the external evidence, they mention the explicit references by Photios to Procopius' works (and Psellos' remarks that are borrowed from these), and a *scholion* to Lucian's *Philopseudes* in relation to Procopius' *Refutation of Proclus' Commentary on the Chaldean Oracles*.

Gioffreda and Trizio support Stiglmayr's arguments against the Procopian paternity of the chapters 139 and 146 by mentioning the anti-Filioquist reasoning on the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Spirit, based on a Byzantine tradition citing Gregory of Nazianzus. They equally show that the topics discussed in the above mentioned chapters echo theological themes discussed by Nicholas elsewhere.

Their palaeographical examination adds further important elements: chapters 139 and 146 have been copied more than once (and with differences!) in Vat. gr. 1096 and Vat. gr. 604 by one and the same person: Isaak Argyros. These two manuscripts, and others, are linked with anti-Palamite circles. The two chapters appear in Argyros' hand in his own *Adversus Cantacuzenum*, a work that makes use of numerous Patristic quotations, and in a *florilegium* that he prepared for subsequent anti-Palamite treatises. The attributions of these chapters to Procopius are in Argyros' hand, and they both serve the purpose of the polemic, by providing arguments against the distinction between God's essence and his providential energies. The attributions to Procopius, therefore, attest to a 14th-century polemic about God's unity and the orthodox understanding of creation, and "in absence of new incontrovertible evidence, this attribution must be regarded as highly dubious" (p. 129).

2 The Caucasus

Tengiz Iremadze discusses the broader context of the reception of Proclus and Neoplatonism in Caucasian philosophy. With its origins in the Byzantine tradition, the Caucasian tradition of philosophy grew into an independent tradition of thought, equally influenced by other philosophical traditions. However, within this Caucasian tradition, Proclus' *Elements of Theology* played an important role.

Ioane Petritsi's famously translated into Georgian and commented on the *Elements of Theology*, but one has to recall that he also translated the works of Nemesius of Emesa. Summarizing Petritsi's commentary and explaining his intellectual project, Iremadze insists on the pedagogical role the Georgian commentator gave *to the Elements: the ultimate goal* of Proclus' work, according to Petritsi, was to train one's intellect in the knowledge of the One in a systematic and syllogistic manner. Iremadze's hypothesis is worth considering: Petritsi's commentary is often like a dialogue with the reader, probably echoing his discussions with the community of monks (or rather novices) of the Gelati monastery. Highly considering Plato and the entire Platonic tradition, Petritsi does seem to be influenced by the Aristotelian heritage.

Ioane Petritsi's translation and commentary on Proclus is relatively familiar to scholars, yet a wider scholarly interaction with the Armenian tradition (including commentaries and translations) is still yet to be considered. Iremadze mentions some of them, such as the translation of the *Elements* into Armenian in 1248 or the 1651 commentary in Armenian on the *Elements* by Svimeon Dshughaezi, which was translated into Georgian in 1757. In the 18th century, there were at least two commentaries on the *Elements* accessible in Georgian.

Iremadze equally mentions other major figures that made a decisive contribution to the assimilation of Proclean thought into Georgian, although not through running commentaries. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani (1658–1726), a diplomat, integrated propositions and references to Proclus in his *Georgian Dictionary* (an encyclopaedia and dictionary). Anton I of Georgia (1720–1788), Patriarch of the Orthodox Georgian Church, cited explicitly and commented upon Petritsi's commentary and Proclus in his work *Spekali*. Joane Bagrationi (1768–1830) mainly relied on the Armenian commentaries on Proclus in his main work, *Kalmasoba*, written in a Platonic dialogue form, where he explains 86 of the 211 propositions of the *Elements*. Iremadze concludes that "die kaukasischen Philosophen nutzten daher gern seine [i.e. Proklos] Lehre bei der Bestimmung der Aufgabe der Philosophie und ihres Wesens" (p. 150).

3 The Lands of Islam

Michael Chase studies the sources and origins of the *Theology of Aristotle*, and sheds new light on the first reception of Hellenic Neoplatonic thinking in 9th-century Baghdad in the circle of al-Kindī, where the *Book of Causes* originated. Chase reopens the file regarding the attribution of a commentary on the *Enneads* to Porphyry, which might have been translated into Arabic, and which was used to compose the *Theology of Aristotle* under the supervision of al-Kindī. Augustine in the West or Gregory of Nyssa in the East knew Plotinus' *Enneads* through Porphyry's exegesis, which consists of three elements: headings (abbreviations of contents), summaries of arguments and commentaries. Chase argues that not only the headings (κεφάλαια) and the summaries (ἐπιχειρήματα) were translated into Arabic and used in the *Theology of Aristotle*, as the recent work by C. D'Ancona has proved, but also the commentaries (ὑπομνήματα), which are otherwise lost.

Leaving behind other scholarly exegesis, Chase studies some of the main themes of the *Theology of Aristotle*, such as the identification of the First Principle with pure being, the "typical confusion" of soul and intellect, the learned ignorance, divine knowledge and providence, instantaneous creation and the doctrine of action "by being alone". Chase shows that all these doctrines were defended by Porphyry, and that even though some of his works are lost, other authors (e.g. Philoponus) ascribed these doctrines to him. In light of this evidence, there is no need, argues Chase, to postulate that the *Theology of Aristotle* was influenced by Dionysius the ps.-Areopagite. An intermediary cannot be fully excluded, but it is more "economical" to postulate the influence of only one author, i.e. Porphyry, notably because in the first paragraph of the *Theology of Aristotle* he is explicitly mentioned as the main source. However, it must be noted that Chase does not claim that the *Theology* is a translation into Arabic of Porphyry's lost commentary on the *Enneads*, inasmuch as he does not deny the possibility of various interventions of the adaptor or editor, al-Kindī. But the Porphyrian origin of the *Theology of Aristotle* should be reconsidered more carefully.

Peter Adamson endorses F. Zimmermann's hypothesis that the *Theology of Aristotle*, a "partial Arabic translation of the last three *Enneads*" (p. 182), together with other major translations from Greek—notably Proclus' *Elements of Theology* and writings of Alexander of Aphrodisias—, all produced within the circle of al-Kindī, circulated in a "metaphysics file" with a preface deliberately attributing them to Aristotle. In the *Harmony of the Two Sages* there are allusions to propositions 1 to 5 (possibly even prop. 25) of the *Elements of Theo-*

logy. Thus, as Adamson points out, al-Fārābī's main difficulty is not to explain the harmony between Plato and Aristotle, but the harmony between Aristotle (of the *Metaphysics*) and Aristotle (of the *Theology*).

In a short section of the *Harmony* devoted to the question of the creation of the universe, al-Fārābī shows that he is aware that a temporal beginning of the universe is denied in *On the Heavens*. As a counterargument, he cites a fragment from the *Theology of Aristotle* clearly dependent on the Arabic Proclus. The harmony is explained through a complex set of arguments based on the identity between Aristotle's First Mover and the One as pure being, exercising a specific type of causality ("without time", hence in accordance with *On the Heavens*), as creator of all things (a trademark of al-Kindī and his circle).

Another section of the *Harmony* discusses the theory of Forms, on which Aristotle notoriously criticised Plato. Yet, as Adamson shows, if "on Aristotle's interpretation the Platonic theory makes Forms the objects of knowledge", "the *Harmony* is saying that there will actually be a science or knowledge that is itself a Form", which the author of the Harmony dismisses as ridiculous (p. 193–194). The contradiction between the Aristotle of the *Metaphysics* and the Aristotle of the *Theology* is solved by al-Fārābī through a digression on divine knowledge stating that, by an extended meaning of words (e.g. by applying synonymous language to nobler realities), one can say that God "knew" the Forms of things he created. This would enable to preserve within the Kindian conceptual framework the understanding of the Aristotelian First Mover as "maker". In both cases examined, Adamson notes that Plato is assimilated to Aristotle, not vice-versa.

Elvira Wakelnig discusses the origins of the *Book of Causes* by examining the 10th-century work, *Al-Fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim al-ilāhīya* by Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-ʿĀmirī. Wakelnig compares it with the version of the *Book of Causes* translated into Latin, and shows that themes and concepts from the first nine chapters of the *Book of Causes* and from chapters 11(?), 12, 16, 18–26, 29–30, 31(?) are tacitly borrowed by al-ʿĀmirī. Wakelnig equally indicates that al-ʿĀmirī's *Al-Fuṣūl* bares similarities with the 16th chapter of a different version of the *Book of Causes* (= *Book of Causes II*), preserved only in Arabic and edited in 2002 by S. Oudaimah and P. Thillet. Wakelnig also identifies significant differences between these two texts, differences that could come from the fact that al-ʿĀmirī had access to a "Proto-*Liber de causis*", that was earlier than the two versions currently known (the *Book of Causes* translated into Latin and the *Book of Causes II*). And it is this "Proto-*Liber de causis*" that al-Kindī might have composed. Wakelnig compares the same *Al-Fuṣūl* with a text entitled *Kitāb al-*

ḥaraka (*Book of Motion*), a compilation of extracts from the Arabic translations of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* and *Elements of Physics*. Some of the propositions translated from the *Elements of Theology* are preserved only in this *Kitāb al-ḥaraka*, which, as Wakelnig argues, was most probably composed before the *Liber de causis II*.

Wakelnig concludes that this Proto-*Liber de causis* might be the source for the four texts examined: the *Book of Causes* translated into Latin, the *Book of Causes II*, the *Kitāb al-ḥaraka* and al-ʿĀmirī's *Al-Fuṣūl*.

Richard Taylor notes that in the Middle Ages the *Book of Causes* was ascribed to Aristotle, while modern scholarship often considers it as no more than an abbreviated version of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*. In his contribution, Taylor intends to reassess this received view (originating in Aquinas' commentary) and focuses mostly on propositions and themes present in the Arabic *De causis*, but absent in Proclus. He examines mostly, but not exclusively, the chapters 5, 8 and 21, and identifies similarities with the *Theology of Aristotle*, *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman* and the ps.-Farabian *Letter on Divine Intellect*, which are all dependent, to various degrees, on Plotinus' *Enneads*. However, as Taylor notes, the idea of a creator or Pure Good as transcendent creative knowledge, present in the chapter 8 of the *Theology of Aristotle*, is rejected by Plotinus in relation to the One and relegated to the level of *Nous*. In the *Plotiniana Arabica* there is certain Aristotelian reminiscence of a self-thinking First Mover.

In order to maintain coherence with this teaching from the *Plotiniana Arabica*, the author of the Arabic *Book of Causes* deliberately modifies the themes from the Proclean propositions 11 and 123 in order to introduce, in chapter 5, the doctrine of the illuminating light shed on the inferior intelligence by the First Cause. Taylor considers that "the source" of this theme is found in the *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman*, depending on Plotinus' *Enneads* V 6,4.14–22. The theme in chapter 21 of the First Cause as perfect, self-sufficient and beyond language is similar to the 10th book of the *Theology of Aristotle*, dependent on *Enneads* V 2,1. The rationale underpinning these transformations and the preference for certain themes, such as the idea of a pure being creator of all things, consists in al-Kindī's agenda to present "philosophy as a companion to the religious teachings of Islam" (p. 225). Taylor emphasizes the importance of connecting the metaphysics of the *Book of Causes* to al-Kindī's intellectual program as a way to revise, on more accurate and solid grounds, received views about the weight and role of the *Elements of the Theology*. The *Book of Causes* is the expression of a "new form of Aristotelianism developed through a transformed understanding of texts from Plotinus" (p. 228).

Jamal Rachak dedicates a contribution to Ibn Bāğğa (Avempace). Firstly, Rachak shows that in Ibn Bāğğa's works of undisputed authority, only Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, Philoponus, Al-Fārābī and Al-Ġazālī are explicitly cited. He endorses Endress' argument that Ibn Bāğğa uses, unwittingly, the Proclean concept of the hierarchy of "spiritual forms" (from the *Elements of Theology*, prop. 15–17) based on a work falsely attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias. Rachak identifies a certain number of Neoplatonic themes in Ibn Bāğğa's texts before discussing a series of letters, or rather thirteen fragments, preserved only in one manuscript (in Oxford, Bodley Pococke 206), which transmit works by his friend and disciple, Ibn al-Imām.

There is a dispute about the authenticity of these fragments. Some scholars—such as the editor of these fragments, Ǧ. al-ʿAlawī—argued against Ibn Bāğğa's authorship, while others—such as M.I. Fayyūmī—argued in favour of their authenticity. Rachak has argued elsewhere that these fragments echo a correspondence between Ibn Bāğğa and Ibn al-Imām, the texts preserved in Oxford being written by the latter. If this hypothesis is accepted, the fragments acquire a major historical significance since they would be among the first texts in the lands of Islam explicitly naming propositions of the *Book of Causes*. Moreover, for the author of these letters, the *Book of Causes* has the same authority as al-Fārābī, al-Ġazālī and the Qurʾan.

4 The Latin West

On the basis of manuscript evidence and stylistic comparisons, Dag Nikolaus Hasse provides a complex analysis of the translations (from Arabic into Latin) of al-Kindī's *On the Intellect*, al-Fārābī's *Enumeration of the Sciences*, Isaac Israeli's *On Definitions and Descriptions* and the *Book of Causes*. Although scholars have taken it for granted that Gundisalvi translated the first three works, none of the manuscripts consulted by Hasse mentions him explicitly. By comparison, at least five manuscripts and the well-known list of translations by Gerard of Cremona's *socii* mention him explicitly in relation with all these texts.

Gerard of Cremona and Dominicus Gundisalvi were contemporaries, both were active in Toledo and served as canons of its cathedral. There is some scholarly debate over the chronology of their translations (assuming that Gundisalvi is indeed the translator). Using specially designed software, Hasse then compared Gerard's eight other translations and the seven other translations by Gundisalvi, and then compared these results with the four previously mentioned works. Hasse's philological and statistical analysis suggests that: in the case of Isaac Israeli, *On Definitions*, Gerard's version was prior to the other

translation (or Gundisalvi's revision). Al-Fārābī's *Enumeration of the Sciences* was first translated by Gerard, then Gundisalvi "revised the translation by thoroughly rewriting some passages", while leaving numerous other passages untouched (p. 265). It is "highly probable" that Gerard was the (first) translator of al-Kindī's *On the Intellect*, as is suggested by some characteristic translations (e.g. *cadere sub* is typical for Gerard, whereas Gundisalvi prefers *subicere*).

The examination of Pattin's *Liber de causis* is, to my mind, less decisive given that the current state of the "edition" and the lack of a rich critical apparatus do not allow such a subtle and nuanced philological analysis. However, Hasse's approach is instructive and it must be included in any upcoming study or edition. His conclusion must also be retained: the current edition of *De causis* has a distinctive "Gerardian sound", and it is "very unlikely that Gundisalvi revised the *Liber de causis*" (p. 272).

Jules Janssens discusses the same topic of the "double translation", but his research and methodology is different from the one provided by Hasse. Moreover, Janssens has a slightly different understanding of the syntagma "double translation", in that it does not apply to two largely different or almost new translations of the same text (like in the cases of the works studies by Hasse), but rather to minimal and limited variations made with the aim of providing a more fluent, "Latinised" version of a first, more literal attempt. Janssens' hypothesis, based on his previous work on the manuscripts of *Avicenna latinus*, is that the variants of such a "double translation" (made either by the first translator or by a copyist) were present in the same, original manuscript.

Janssens discusses several cases, but I mention here only two of them: one is the expression *non destruuntur nec permutantur* in chap. x(xi) of the *Book of Causes*, prop. 101, l. 55–56. Endorsing Vansteenkiste's hypothesis that *permutantur* perfectly renders the Arabic *tastahīlu*, Janssens argues that the translator firstly chose *non destruuntur* and then he opted for *permutantur* in order to provide a more accurate translation. Indeed, some manuscripts have *non destruuntur vel permutantur*, with *vel* indicating in fact an alternative solution for the Latin translation and not a complementary explanation in the original. From the critical apparatus provided by Pattin, one concludes that a branch of the manuscript tradition transmitted the two variants and another branch only the first variant (*destruuntur*), but none of the manuscripts seem to transmit only the second, more accurate, variant (*permutantur*). It may be worth discussing, taking a similar approach, the case of *non patitur neque destruitur*, from ii, 21, l. 78–79.

Another interesting example is the expression *apponitur vel parificatur* proposed by Pattin in ii, 25, l. 91. Janssens notes that numerous manuscripts

have *opponitur*, and that a copyist probably decided to modify it to *apponitur* in order to provide more coherence with *parificatur*. Janssens suggests that the translator hesitated between reading *yuḥāḏī* (*opponitur*) or *yuǧārī* (*parificatur*): without diacritical points, the similar orthographies of these verbs can generate confusion.

Janssens strongly emphasizes the importance of producing a solid critical edition of the Arabic text (and the search for new Arabic manuscripts as the basis for it) and a new, better Latin edition. The latter should mirror, on the one hand, the Arabic archetype and, on the other hand, its diverse transmission in the Latin West.

Pascale Bermon addresses a question that, since the publication of the edition of Thomas Aquinas' commentary on the *Book of Causes* in 1954, has been overlooked by scholars: what is precisely the text that he knew and commented upon?

This question might have seemed redundant inasmuch as everyone read in the introduction (originally published in 1954 and preserved in the "new revised edition" from 2002): "J'ai imprimé un texte du *Liber de causis* qui suit celui de Bardenhewer sauf chaque fois que saint Thomas, citant le *Liber*, présente un autre texte. J'ai soigneusement noté dans l'apparat critique à l'endroit de ces citations les divergences. Autrement dit, je me suis appliqué à reconstituer, chaque fois que c'est possible, le manuscrit que saint Thomas avait sous les yeux" (*Introduction* to Thomas d'Aquinas, *Expositio super Librum de causis*, Paris, Vrin, 2002 p. LXXIII). In reality, the edition from 2002 is nothing but a re-impression of the 1954 edition. The expression "new revised edition" is regrettably inaccurate and misleading. Scholars should remember that in the "new edition" of Aquinas' commentary they will not find Pattin's text (not even in the bibliography!) and more generally nothing that has been published on the topic since 1954. And with Bermon's article, one realizes that even the Latin edition does not respect its philological promises.

Carefully analysing Aquinas' exegesis of the propositions with the famous Arabic transliterations *alachili* / *achili* and *yliathim*, Bermon notes (p. 329–331, 332, 334) several cases where Saffrey does not indicate the differences between the text commented by Aquinas and the edition published by Bardenhewer. The first conclusion is obvious: the Latin text of the *Book of Causes* that one reads in Saffrey's edition is not what Aquinas had in front of his eyes. Bermon reconstructs parts of the text that Aquinas might have known and concludes that he read a version of the *Book of Causes* without the transliteration *alachili* / *achili*. But Aquinas knew and explained the term *yliathim* (form), which he connects with *hylè* (matter), most probably influenced by the fake etymology

proposed by Albert the Great. The Arabic original, *ḥilya*, derives from the Proto-*Liber de causis*, as E. Wakelnig argues in her study, and is borrowed from the Arabic translation of the *Enneads*.

Alessandra Beccarisi argues that Eckhart prefers *Liber de causis* to Proclus, and, unlike Dietrich of Freiberg, cites them together only five times. Although overlooked by scholarship, proposition XV is the most cited by Eckhart and has, according to Beccarisi, a pivotal role in his thought. Beccarisi identifies and discusses three main themes where Eckhart uses this proposition: in relation to the concept of self-identity of the One (*negatio negationis*); in relation with the terms *istic* and *Isticheit*; with reference to the metaphysics of the intellect (self-determination).

Beccarisi argues that there is no distinction between Eckhart's German and Latin works in respect to his understanding of the One (as if it were transcendently beyond Being in the German texts and ontological-transcendental in the Latin texts). Beccarisi shows that "the One is […] the highest negation, because it is the Being without negations, or rather Being itself" (p. 357). Eckhart builds his interpretation of the Neoplatonic One upon the divine self-revelation of Exodus (*ego sum qui sum*). Understood as a manifestation of God's self-reflexivity, a returning to His own self, it is in accordance with the *reditio completa* of the prop. XV of the *Book of Causes*. In his German sermons, Eckhart expresses the same idea through the terms *istic* and *Isticheit*. Analysing the theory of self-determination, Beccarisi refers once more to the German sermons and argues that the expression *inwert würkende* stands for the Latin *reflexio*, and expresses the capacity of the intellect to "work inwardly". Pursuing the same careful philological and speculative analysis, Beccarisi endorses Markus Vinzent's hypothesis that Eckhart himself translated some fragments of his commentary on the *Book of Wisdom* from Latin into German, and that an overlooked citation and interpretation of prop. XVII of the *Book of Causes* is complementary proof of this. One of Beccarisi's final conclusions is that "Proclus had (…) an importance certainly inferior to that which some scholars have attributed to him" (p. 371).

Victoria Arroche considers that Dante used the *Liber de causis* to develop his political theories in the *Monarchia* and *Convivio*. According to Arroche, two concepts are crucial in this regard: *potentia* (or rather *ultima potentia*) and *virtus*, inasmuch as they denote power and strength, but are also the same words used to describe the flowing from the first causes through the secondary causes until the lowest levels of reality. This blending of metaphysical and political concepts represents for Arroche one of the main characteristics of

Dante's political thought. In some significant paragraphs of the *Monarchia* and the *Convivio*, Dante uses *ultimum de potentia* or *potenza ultima* in respect to the intellectual virtue of the human being.

As Arroche notes, in the *Liber de causis* one equally reads the same syntagma: *intelligentia, completa et ultima in potentia et reliquis bonitatibus* (IV.43). Intellectual activity is not only the ultimate goal of each individual, but also the ultimate goal of the human race. And politics, as the "specific relation between the community and the Monarch [...] stems from the exercise of that intellectual capacity" (p. 383).

Arroche indicates that two more concepts are equally important in understanding Dante's political view: *ordinatio* and *reductio*. For the latter, Arroche argues that this concept establishes the monarch's independence from any spiritual authority. The former, mentioned in Book I of the *Monarchia*, indicates "an alignment of the effects towards the cause *ratione finis*", while the latter, mentioned in Book III of the same text, "shows that the emperor's authority depends directly on God" (p. 383). It is in the same Book I that Dante cites the *Book of Causes* in order to the provide a metaphysical proof that the emperor can be considered a first cause that acts in the realm of time. As such, the monarchy, as an autonomous political institution, orders all the levels of reality to the ultimate end and "assures the causal connection between intermediaries and effects" (p. 384).

Sokrates-Athanasios Kiosoglou considerably enriches the list of propositions from the *Elements of Theology* in Ficino's *Commentary on Philebus* providing evidence for either (shorter / longer) literal citations or freely adapted paraphrases from propositions 8, 9, 21, 26, 27, 31, 35, 43, 80, 134, 143, 186, 191, 199. In all these cases, Moerbeke's Latin translation seems to have been used and preferred to Proclus' Greek text. In a pioneering study, C. Steel observed the presence of only propositions 1–4, 5, 20 in chapter IV, prop. 13 in chapter V and prop. 12 in chapters V and XXX of Ficino's *Commentary on Philebus*.

Kiosoglou deliberately avoids discussing the question of Ficino's translation of *Elements of Theology*. In a letter to Poliziano from 1474, Ficino claims that he translated the *Elements of Theology* and the *Elements of Physics*, yet in the second catalogue sent to Prenninger in 1489, he does not mention them among his translations and adds that he read them in the extant Latin translations (despite his knowledge of Greek). This topic has been recently examined by D. Robichaud, and Kiosoglou's contribution brings forth overlooked proofs about Ficino's knowledge and use of the *Elements of Theology*.

Kiosoglou endorses Steel's thesis that these citations from Proclus' *Elements of Theology* are not simple adornments, but have a doctrinal weight articu-

lating from within Ficino's own "conceptualization of felicity, and, by extension, of pleasure" (p. 398), the goal that we all try to reach. Moreover, Kiosoglou concludes: "In grounding the whole commentary on Proclus' axiomatic formulations (and not so much as one might expect on Dionysius' attractive, but suspicion-arousing, eloquence), Ficino provided his audience with a seemingly unquestionable and solid system of thought that, despite its pagan character, could easily be presented as the basis of a Christian worldview" (p. 402).

5 The Hebraic Tradition

Jean-Pierre Rothschild focuses on the hitherto partially unedited glosses and commentaries of Hillel of Verona, the first translator of the *Book of Causes* into Hebrew. An edition and French translation are provided in the appendix of the article.

Rothschild firstly notes the remarkable interest for the *Book of Causes* between the end of the 13th and the end of the 15th century: it was translated five times after 1272, four times from Latin, and once from Arabic. However, that diffusion is limited to a restrained, privileged circle of learned scholars (often from the same intellectual lineage) interested in the most influential texts of the Western tradition.

Hillel of Verona's translation of the *Book of Causes* and original commentary (assuming, with a degree of probability, that there is one and the same author) are preserved in a unique manuscript at the Bodleian in Oxford. Rothschild reassesses the chronology of this translation and places it after 1272, showing that Hillel knew (at least partially) Aquinas' *De ente et essentia* and commentary on the *Liber de causis*, as well as the Moerbeke's Latin translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, and probably even Giles of Rome's commentary on the *Liber de causis*. Hillel's is the only Hebrew running commentary on the *Book of Causes*. Juda Romano's partial translation of Aquinas' *Exposition* on the *Book of Causes*, or Moïse b. Sabbataï's sporadic glosses in the margins of Juda's translation do not have the same importance in this respect. Moreover, Hillel is the first (and probably the only) author who connects the *Book of Causes* to the *Book of Principles* by al-Fārābī (not known to Latin authors), to whom he also attributes (like other Latin authors) the secondary propositions of the *Book of Causes*.

Hillel's commentary rejects, at times, the doctrines of the *Book of Causes* as "contrary to faith", but, as Rothschild observes, that may indicate the influence from Thomas Aquinas' interpretation (for example, in prop. x(xi)). The possible influence of Maimonides' theory of the divine names can be observed

in Hillel's commentaries on prop. XVI(XVII) and XVII(XVIII). Another remarkable aspect of Hillel's commentary is his criticism of Neoplatonic principles from the point of view of medieval medicine: Hillel was also a trained physician. Rothschild convincingly argues that "ce traducteur-critique, encore une fois, tient dans l'histoire du *Liber de causis* une position singulière" (p. 427).

Saverio Campanini endorses Rothschild's remarks about the vast diffusion of the *Book of Causes* in Jewish Medieval thought, from (probably) lost translations to the "endless field of tacit" references. Campanini focuses on Kabbalistic literature. In some older sources, one finds the "classical" attribution to Aristotle and the title *Book of Causes*: Moshe Botarel (15th c.) mentions this reference in the *Kevod ha-Shem* attributed to El ʿazar ha-Qallir (6th–7th c.). A more subtle and diffused influence of the *Book of Causes*, yet with an attribution to Plato, is to be found in Azri'el of Gerona's *Derek ha-emunah we-derek ha-kefirah* (12th–13th c.). These are some of the oldest references to the *Book of Causes* outside the written tradition in Arabic.

The best-known reference to the *Book of Causes* is the passage quoted by Abraham Abulafia (second half of the 13th c.) in his *Imre shefer* where he explicitly cites prop. V(VI) of "the *Book of the Highest Substances*" written by Plato. None of the known Hebrew translations of the *Book of Causes* could have been the source for Abulafia, although he was a pupil of Hillel (which might explain the reference to Plato, and also to al-Fārābī). The reference and citation are found in the 16th century *Shaʿar ha-chesheq* by Jochanan Alemanno, a large commentary on the Song of Songs. Campanini argues that Jochanan Alemanno quotes *Liber de causis* "repeatedly in his unpublished works and notebooks" and was aware of its Neoplatonic metaphysical background, referring explicitly to Proclus (p. 461). One can conclude that he was aware of the Latin tradition originated in Aquinas' commentary. From Alemanno, the reference to "the *Book of the Highest Substances*" passed into Isaac Abravanel's commentary on the book of Exodus (40,34) written in Venice around 1506; and from Abravanel into Joseph Del Medigo's *Sefer Novelot Chokmah*, printed in Basel in 1631. Joseph Del Medigo stressed the similarities between the doctrines of the *De causis* (attributed by Plato) with Proclus, Plotinus, Al-Ghazālī, the Kabbalists, the Bible and the Jewish exegetes.

Campanini's final remarks describe the role of the *Book of Causes* for Kabbalists: "Kabbalah does not need the *Liber de causis*, and not even negative theology, but is ready to use it for apologetic purposes, to defend *ad extra* its ineffable contents" (p. 474).

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This volume does not aim to exhaust the question of the diffusion of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*: it is not a compendium and it should not be considered as such. Its main goal is to gather studies that deepen questions that have been freely chosen by each contributor. However, some common interests can be identified within each of the five sections.

The studies of the first section isolate themes and citations (explicit and implicit) attesting to the diffusion of Proclus in Byzantium, and address some major questions about the authenticity of many of these works. This effort is also carried on with the contribution on "Caucasian philosophy" inasmuch as the first Georgian monk, Ioane Petritsi, who translated and commented the *Elements of Theology*, was probably a pupil of Michael Psellos and John Italos. The section dedicated to the lands of Islam focuses mainly on the 9th-century historical and cultural context that prepared and made possible the composition of the *Book of Causes*. The contributions study the circle of al-Kindī, where both Plotinus and Proclus were translated and adapted to a monotheistic environment within the same "Aristotelised" intellectual milieu. In a remarkable paper entitled "Aristotélisation de la gnoséologie néoplatonicienne dans le *Kalām fī maḥḍ al-khair*", presented on April 16, 2016, Marc Geoffroy analysed in great details the transformation and translation of proposition 123 from the *Elements of Theology* into chapter V(VI) of the *Book of Causes*, underlying some of the previously overlooked sources for the *Book of Causes*, such as Aristotle's *De anima* and *De sensu et sensato*, and the vocabulary borrowed from the Qur'ān. The written text of this paper could not be found on Marc Geoffroy's computer. Fortunately, there is an audio-recording of his paper, in French, uploaded and accessible at the following address: https://www.neoplat.eu/media/. The section dedicated to the Latin West analyses mainly the reception of the *Book of Causes* both in Latin and in vernacular, but also the tacit citations of the *Elements of Theology* in Ficino's *Commentary on the Philebus*. The reception of the *Book of Causes* in the Jewish medieval thought (in both philosophical and Kabbalistic texts) depends mostly—yet not exclusively!—on the Latin tradition.

Cluj-Napoca
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PART 1

Byzantium

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CHAPTER 2

An Orthodox and Byzantine Reception of the *Elements of Theology*

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The question of the existence of Byzantine philosophy may be intellectually interesting but remains fundamentally surreal.[1] Regardless of whether one defines the Byzantine Empire as beginning with Diocletian (284–305), Constantine (306–337) or Theodosius (379–395), it is clear that Proclus (8th February 412–17th April 485) composed his text within an Empire whose capital was Constantinople, and whose official religion was Christianity since 27th February 380.[2] While this may be obvious, it is interesting for the reception of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, a text that was composed within a Byzantine background and whose subsequent translations where done from originals copied within the Byzantine Empire.

It is such an environment which gave rise to the anecdote that Proclus advised the emperor Anastasius (491–518) on how to defeat an invading enemy army with Greek fire.[3] The story gives us a non-philosophical explanation to the

1 An overview of intellectual history is Kaldellis and Sinissioglou (2017).

2 *Codex Theodosianus*, xvi.1.2 = *Codex Iustiniani* 1.1.1. Cfr. *Basilicorum libri LX*, 1.1.1: *Imppp. gratianus, Valentinianus et Theodosius aaa. edictum ad populum urbis Constantinopolitanae. cunctos populos, quos clementiae nostrae regit temperamentum, in tali volumus religione versari, quam divinum Petrum apostolum tradidisse romanis religio usque ad nunc ab ipso insinuata declarat quamque pontificem Damasum sequi claret et Petrum Alexandriae episcopum virum apostolicae sanctitatis, hoc est, ut secundum apostolicam disciplinam evangelicamque doctrinam Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti unam deitatem sub parili maiestate et sub pia Trinitate credamus*. (380 febr. 27).

3 Iohannes Malalas, *Chronographia*, 16.16.22–37: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἀναστάσιος πρῴην μὲν ἦν μεταστειλάμενος διὰ Μαρίνου τὸν φιλόσοφον Πρόκλον τὸν Ἀθηναῖον, ἄνδρα περιβόητον, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀναστάσιος· 'τί ἔχω ποιῆσαι τῷ κυνὶ τούτῳ, ὅτι οὕτως ταράσσει με καὶ τὴν πολιτείαν, φιλόσοφε;' ὁ δὲ Πρόκλος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· 'μὴ ἀθυμήσῃς, βασιλεῦ· φεύγει γὰρ καὶ ἀπέρχεται, ἢ μόνον πέμψεις κατ' αὐτοῦ τινας.' καὶ εὐθέως ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀναστάσιος εἶπεν Μαρίνῳ τῷ Σύρῳ τῷ ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων ἑστῶτι πλησίον, ὅτε διελέγετο ὁ βασιλεὺς τῷ φιλοσόφῳ Πρόκλῳ, ὁπλίσασθαι κατὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Βιταλιανοῦ, ὄντι εἰς τὸ πέραν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως. καὶ λέγει Πρόκλος ὁ φιλόσοφος ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βασιλέως Μαρίνῳ τῷ Σύρῳ· 'ὃ δίδωμί σοι λάβε, καὶ ἔξελθε κατὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Βιταλιανοῦ.' καὶ ἐκέλευσεν ὁ αὐτὸς φιλόσοφος ἐνεχθῆναι τὸ λεγόμενον θεῖον ἄπυρον πολύ, εἰπὼν τριβῆναι αὐτὸ ὡς εἰς μῖγμα

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importance of Proclus and his philosophical research. The *Elements of Theology* employed a sort of scientific method, familiar from Euclid, which was part of child's education, and explained terms which were mysteriously present in such concise authors as Dionysius the Areopagite. The tenth-century *Suda* refers to Proclus as a plagiarist of Dionysius:

> ἰστέον δέ, ὥς τινες τῶν ἔξω σοφῶν καὶ μάλιστα Πρόκλος θεωρήμασι πολλάκις τοῦ μακαρίου Διονυσίου κέχρηται καὶ αὐταῖς δὲ ξηραῖς ταῖς λέξεσι. καὶ ἔστιν ὑπόνοιαν ἐκ τούτου λαβεῖν ὡς οἱ ἐν Ἀθήναις παλαιότεροι τῶν φιλοσόφων σφετερισάμενοι τὰς αὐτοῦ πραγματείας, ὧν αὐτὸς μνημονεύει πρὸς Τιμόθεον γράφων, ἀπέκρυψαν, ἵνα πατέρες αὐτοὶ ὀφθῶσι τῶν θείων αὐτοῦ λόγων.
>
> *Suda* Δ.1170.80–86

> One should know that some pagan thinkers and especially Proclus often employ ideas and even entire expressions [taken from] the blessed Dionysius. One may suspect that they took them from him, since the more ancient philosophers in Athens appropriated and hid his material, as he himself reminds us when he writes to Timotheos, so that they would appear as the authors of his divine words.

That a sixth century historian from Antioch or a tenth century encyclopaedia could refer so easily to Proclus is simply because his philosophy was known even to non-specialists. Indeed, Proclus permeates Byzantine thought everywhere. The result of this was that those western scholars who could read Greek found Proclean ideas present in all forms of Byzantine manuscripts both within the texts and the margins, and it was only recently that ancient philosophers have been separated from such Proclean influence.[4] The step away from such a peculiar and Byzantine choice of philosophy to saying that there is no such thing as Byzantine philosophy is as if an analytical thinker said that Hegel (1770–1831) was not a philosopher since he did not share their

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λεπτόν, καὶ δέδωκεν τῷ αὐτῷ Μαρίνῳ, εἰρηκὼς αὐτῷ, ὅτι· 'ὅπου ῥίψεις ἐξ αὐτοῦ εἴτε εἰς οἶκον εἴτε ἐν πλοίῳ μετὰ τὸ ἀνατεῖλαι τὸν ἥλιον, εὐθέως ἅπτεται ὁ οἶκος ἢ τὸ πλοῖον καὶ ὑπὸ πυρὸς ἀναλίσκεται.'

4 Hegel himself claims that in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that the best reading of Plato's *Parmenides* was that of Proclus: "der Parmenides des Plato, wohl das größte Kunstwerk der alten Dialektik, für die wahre Enthüllung und den positiven Ausdruck des göttlichen Lebens gehalten wurde" (Hegel 1807, p. 48) ["when the *Parmenides* of Plato—perhaps the greatest literary product of ancient dialectic—has been taken to be the positive expression of the divine life, the unveiling and disclosing of its inmost truth."]

methods and conclusions. One should remember that Hegel in his time had been defined as the 'German Proclus'.[5]

The history of philosophy is full of enlightened individuals who were not understood in their time or their country and often made a career of such complaints. It is for this reason this paper focuses on the reception of the *Elements of Theology* in three major Byzantine authors: Maximus the Confessor (579–662), Michael Psellos (1018–1081), Gregory Palamas (1296–1359). A brief word about them will show that, with the eye of hindsight, they are not exceptional but representative of Byzantine culture. Maximus the Confessor was regarded as a Saint in the Byzantine church and the sixth ecumenical council of 680–681 was convened explicitly to confirm and support his ideas.[6] Michael Psellos could be considered an eccentric thinker, except he was appointed consul of the philosophers in 1047 by the emperor and his over 1000 works survive in ca 1700 manuscripts,[7] which defines his success and clear reception, but almost exclusively among Byzantines.[8] Gregory Palamas in the fourteenth century defined Byzantine mysticism, known as hesychasm, and his ideas were endorsed officially in 1341, 1347 and 1351.[9] Moreover his ideas were once more defended in 1368, the synod which condemned Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274) and in which Palamas was declared a Saint of the Orthodox Church.

The reception of the *Elements of Theology* in these authors is representative. If one may start with the eleventh century the easiest case is that of Michael Psellos who was directly interested in the *Elements of Theology*. Indeed, he quotes the following propositions directly:

– in *Philosophica Minora* I, he cites the *Elements of Theology* 102, 110, 116, 140
– in *Philosophica Minora* II, he cites the *Elements of Theology* 20, 35, 39, 64, 81, 90, 103, 109, 110, 129, 166–168, 170–196, 198–202, 204–206, 208–211

Psellos openly refers to Proclus and uses his ideas to explain obscure points of ancient philosophy, or as instruments to solve dilemmas of contemporary theology. Psellos also explains a point of orthodox mysticism employing directly proposition 71 of the *Elements of Theology* in *Theologica* I essay 11 (uncreated light of Mt Tabor).[10] Psellos did not think it was problem to study a pagan thinker like Proclus and it even made him popular at the imperial court where

5 L. Feuerbach, *Grundsätze einer Philosophie der Zukunft*, p. 87–171 paragraph 29.
6 COGD 1. 195–202.
7 Moore (2005).
8 One exception was Marsilio Ficino who translated some of his works into Latin especially on demonology.
9 COGD 4.133–152. COGD 4.155–170. COGD 4.171–218.
10 Lauritzen (2012a).

he obtained the title of consul of philosophers (ὕπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων) in 1047.[11] The peculiar status of Psellos, whatever one may think of him, is that he was popular among contemporaries and was a well-read author for the next four hundred years. He provided an acceptable method of reading Proclus which reveals the Byzantine fascination with later Neoplatonism. Scholars tend to emphasize his role as a teacher, often reflecting their own interests. More than half of Psellos' letters are written to members of the imperial bureaucracy and specifically to judges (κριταί).[12] These were people familiar with the *Elements* of Euclid but interested in philosophy. There is even evidence of study of Proclus' commentary on the *Elements of Euclid* in the eleventh century.[13] Their duty consisted of applying their notions of geometry to land measurement for tax assessment.[14] Thus the *Elements of Theology* may have appealed to the educated Byzantine bureaucrat specifically for this reason: the form was familiar and useful, but the content was philosophical. If Psellos was not an original thinker,[15] which is possible but needs to be investigated, then he was able to express correctly what intelligent readers wanted to hear. This is where Maximus the Confessor becomes important. In his letter to Patriarch Xiphilinos, Psellos argues that he reads Plato correctly and especially since his reading corresponds to that given by Maximus the Confessor:

> τὴν δέ γε φυσικὴν θεωρίαν καὶ ὁ κοινὸς Μάξιμος, ἢ μᾶλλον ἐμός—φιλόσοφος γάρ—, δευτέραν μετὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν τίθησιν ἀρετήν, τὴν μαθηματικὴν οὐσίαν μὴ προσποιούμενος.
>
> MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Ep. Xiphil.* 72–75

> Our, or rather, my Maximus, for he is a philosopher, considers natural contemplation as the second virtue after praxis, without considering mathematical substance.

Psellos here argues succinctly that above the visible world, there is an incorporeal world which also exists. Indeed, the principles which define the visible world also have a form of existence. These are the principles, or what Maximus calls the Λόγοι, which may be contemplated and maybe even studied. This

11 Lefort (1976).
12 Jeffreys Lauxtermann (2017).
13 Heiberg (1929) p. 72–75. See Lauritzen (2016).
14 Dölger (1927).
15 Ioannou defined him as *Weiblich* in contrast with Italos (?) in Ioannou (1956) p. 16.

becomes an important doctrine especially later on in such thinkers as Gregory Sinaites and Gregory Palamas. We will return later to this question. One may develop an aspect which is the notion of what is incorporeal. This had been a problem specifically for Porphyry (234–305) as one may see from *Sententia* 1 and *Sententia* 2 which claimed that the incorporeal could be in no place. This meant that demons could not exist since they are incorporeal but have a specific place:

> 'Καὶ ὁ διάβολος' φησί 'μετ' αὐτῶν'. ἀλλὰ τίς οὗτος ὁ λόγος ὁ βαθὺς καὶ ἀπόρρητος; φήσουσιν ἡμῖν ἴσως Ἕλληνες ὅτι 'πᾶν μὲν σῶμα ἐν τόπῳ, οὐδὲν δὲ τῶν καθ' αὑτὰ ἀσωμάτων, καθὸ τοιοῦτον, ἐστὶν ἐν τόπῳ', καὶ ὅτι τὰ 'καθ' αὑτὰ ἀσώματα πανταχῇ' πεφύκασιν εἶναι, τόπῳ μὴ περιγραφόμενα. κἀντεῦθεν καὶ συλλογίσονται ὡς, ἐπεὶ καὶ ὁ διάβολος ἀσώματος πάντῃ, καὶ ἀπερίγραπτος· εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀπερίγραπτος, καὶ πανταχῇ· εἰ δὲ πανταχῇ, σταίη ἂν καὶ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. ληρώδης οὗτος ὁ λόγος καὶ τῆς Πορφυρίου πλάνης ἀμβλωθρίδιον ἀπογέννημα.
>
> MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Theologica* I.32.118–125

> He says 'And the devil is with them'. But what is this deep and mysterious idea? Maybe the Greeks will tell us that 'each body is in a place, none of the incorporeal beings, as such, are in a place' and that 'the incorporeal beings in themselves are everywhere, not circumscribed in place' and therefore they will also argue that since the devil is incorporeal he is also uncircumscribed. If he is uncircumscribed he is also everywhere. If he is uncircumscribed he would stand also before God. This speech is blasphemous and an aborted offshoot of the madness of Porphyry.

The principle criticized by Psellos is that the incorporeal has a universal existence. Indeed, he indicates that the incorporeal must be understood as separated, as Proclus had done in the *Elements of Theology* proposition 82. Moreover, the problem with Porphyry is connected with the fact that everything, including the incorporeal, has some form of existence. This is clear from proposition 16 of the *Elements of Theology*. Proclus defines the incorporeal as something which is capable of reverting to itself (proposition 15) and connects such self-reversion with movement. Since all movement depends on a cause, the incorporeal is part of the level of reality which holds existence. The argument present in *Ambigua* 7 of Maximus the Confessor is the following:

> Εἰ γὰρ τὸ θεῖον ἀκίνητον, ὡς πάντων πληρωτικόν, πᾶν δὲ τὸ ἐκ μὴ ὄντων τὸ εἶναι λαβὸν καὶ κινητόν.
>
> MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *Ambigua* 7.3

> If, in the first place, we accept that the divine is immovable (since it fills all things), whereas everything that has received it being ex nihilo is in motion
>
> tr. CONSTAS

Before entering the question of the philosophy behind this passage, the Proclean language is striking. The use of terms such as moving and moved and the idea that existence is secondary and not universal. Moreover, the use of the word 'everything' reminds one of the recurring expressions in the *Elements of Theology*. To turn to the question of content, if one looks at the expression 'since it fills all things' one may see the echo of the *Elements of Theology*, proposition 98.29–31:

> τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν αἴτιον, τὸ πληρωτικὸν τῶν μεταλαγχάνειν αὐτοῦ πεφυκότων καὶ ἀρχικὸν τῶν δευτέρων πάντων καὶ παρὸν πᾶσι ταῖς τῶν ἐλλάμψεων γονίμοις προόδοις.
>
> PROCLUS, *Elements of Theology*, 98.29–31

> We mean by cause that which fills all things naturally capable of participating it, which is the source of all secondary existences and by the fecund outpouring of irradiations is present to them all.
>
> tr. DODDS

The second point which echoes Proclus is the idea that being concerns the realm of what is below the divine and that this is defined by movement. This can be seen in the *Elements of Theology*, proposition 14 where being is defined as moved or unmoved:

> Πᾶν τὸ ὂν ἢ ἀκίνητόν ἐστιν ἢ κινούμενον·
>
> PROCLUS, *Elements of theology*, 14

> All that exists is either moved or unmoved.
>
> tr. DODDS

These two passages from Proclus show how Maximus is employing principles easily found in the *Elements of Theology*. This occurs rather often. In the passage of Maximus, one should also not neglect that the definition of the divine and the creation *ex nihilo* are peculiar to a Christian thinker and find echoes of language, but necessarily of content. One may find sources other than Proclus as well, but these are qualified. For example:

> Πάντα γὰρ ὅσα γέγονε πάσχει τὸ κινεῖσθαι, ὡς μὴ ὄντα αὐτοκίνησις ἢ αὐτοδύναμις.
>
> MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *Ambigua* 7.9

> For all things that have come to be passively experience being moved, since they are neither motion itself nor power itself.
>
> tr. CONSTAS

The more usual form is αὐτοκινησία, but a peculiar confirmation can be found in John of Damascus who uses Maximus' expression.[16] The expression αὐτοκίνησις is found also in Plotinus 6.6.2 and 6.6.6. The expression αὐτοδύναμις is present in Dionysius the Areopagite where he indicates clearly that the divine is above self-power.[17] Thus reflective movements are considered inferior to the Divine itself. Indeed, the passage of Maximus is differentiating between what is and what becomes.

Stepping back briefly one my notice that Maximus is discussing a question of Christian exegesis by using the concepts of πάθος, κίνησις, ὄντα, αὐτοκίνησις and αὐτοδύναμις. These notions can be found together only in Proclus. One may present a passage from the *Parmenides* commentary where such notions are explained:

> οὐ κινεῖται τὸ ἓν καὶ ὅτι ἡ αὐτοκίνησις οὐκ ἔστι, καὶ ὅτι οὐχ ἕστηκε τὸ ἓν καὶ ὅτι στάσις οὐκ ἔστι·
>
> PROCLUS, *In Parmenidem*, 1171.35–37

> The One does not move and that selfmovement does not exist and that the One does not rest and that rest does not exist.

The question of rest and motion in relation to the Divine is the aim of the *Ambiguum* 7 in terms familiar from Proclus. Moreover, Maximus aims to say that the soul is not essentially connected to the divine, since it is logical and always connected to the body. This is the famous doctrine present in Plotinus *Enneads* 4.8.8 where he says that *against platonic doctrine*, he believed the upper part of the soul was unified with the one. Proclus thought it was wrong and wrote proposition 211 of the *Elements of Theology* to prove it:

16 John Damascenus, *Epositio fidei*, 59.223.

17 Dionysius Areopagites, *De Divinis Nominibus* 201.16: ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν καὶ τὴν αὐτοδύναμιν εἶναι.

> Καὶ εἰ χρὴ παρὰ δόξαν τῶν ἄλλων τολμῆσαι τὸ φαινόμενον λέγειν σαφέστερον, οὐ πᾶσα οὐδ' ἡ ἡμετέρα ψυχὴ ἔδυ, ἀλλ' ἔστι τι αὐτῆς ἐν τῷ νοητῷ ἀεί·
>
> PLOTINUS, *Enneads*, 4.8.8.1–3

> And if one must dare to speak rather openly against the opinion of others, our soul did not descend entirely, but there is a part of it which is always in the intelligible.

> Πᾶσα μερικὴ ψυχὴ κατιοῦσα εἰς γένεσιν ὅλη κάτεισι, καὶ οὐ τὸ μὲν αὐτῆς ἄνω μένει, τὸ δὲ κάτεισιν.
>
> PROCLUS, *Elements of Theology*, 211

> Every particular soul, when it descends into temporal process, descends entire: there is not a part of it which remains above and a part which descends.

Maximus also thinks that it is impossible to separate the body and soul.

> Ἐπ' ἀμφοῖν τοιγαροῦν ἡ σχέσις, ψυχῆς λέγω καὶ σώματος, ὡς ὅλου εἴδους ἀνθρωπίνου μερῶν ἀναφαιρέτως νοουμένη, παρίστησι καὶ τὴν ἅμα τούτων γένεσιν.
>
> MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *Ambigua* 7.43.1–3

> Thus the relation of the two, by which I mean soul and body, as the whole human form whose parts can be separated only in thought, reveals that both come into being simultaneously.

Thus, one can see that there are linguistic parallels with the *Elements of Theology*, namely philosophical principles are expressed in a manner similar to Proclus' book of *Elements*. There are also philosophical principles in common, namely the combination of movement being and the divine. Moreover, the aims are similar. For example, the idea that the soul and body form a unit without there being an intellectual unit with God as Plotinus had proposed.

As Psellos had pointed out in the letter to patriarch Xiphilinos, what Maximus the Confessor did was to study the intermediary realm of reality between God and Man. To provide application to the question of the divine λόγοι and divine energies as applied to the physical world and therefore to allow their contemplation in his famous φυσικὴ θεωρία. It is for this reason that the council of 680–681 defined Maximus as correct and a saint.

If one turns to Gregory Palamas in the fourteenth century, one sees a further development of Proclean influence. The hesychast theologian was accused of being Platonic by one of his adversaries. He acknowledges the attack and gives the following paragraph to describe it:

> Ἀλλὰ καὶ μετὰ τοῦτον αὖ ὕστερον ἐπετείως ἄγοντος πλατώνεια καὶ σωκράτεια Πρόκλου τοῦ Λυκίου, φῶς ὡράθη ποτὲ τοῖς συμμύσταις τὴν κεφαλὴν περιθέον. Ἀλλὰ τοῦτ' ἔδειξεν ἡμῖν τὸ φῶς αὖθις, ὅθεν ὁ περὶ τὴν αὐτὴν αὐτοῦ κεφαλὴν ἤδη τελευτῶντος φανεὶς ἕρπων δράκων, καθάπερ οἱ παρατυχόντες ἱστόρησαν. Καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ οὐκ ἀπηξίωσεν ἔτι περιὼν ἐξειπεῖν ὅθεν τὸ φῶς ἀνέλαμπεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνο· 'καθαρμοῖς γὰρ χαλδαϊκοῖς', ὡς αὐτός φησι, 'χρώμενος, ἑκατικοῖς φάσμασι φωτοειδέσιν αὐτοπτουμένοις ὡμίλησε', τῆς 'δὲ Ἑκάτης, σκοτεινά', φησὶν ὁ ἀληθὴς θεολόγος, 'τὰ φάσματα'.
>
> GREGORY PALAMAS, *Contra Acyndinum* 7. 9.26

> Beside Plotinus, Proclus of Lycia was once leading yearly festivals for Plato and Socrates and a light was seen by the initiated surrounding his head. But he showed us the light another time. From it appeared a crawling snake around his head while he was dying. While still alive, he did not refrain from explaining where that light was shining from onto him: as he says 'After completing the Chaldean purifications, he was in touch with enlightened self-revealing apparitions of Hecate' the true theologian says 'the dark apparitions of Hecate'

This explicit reference to Proclus reveals that Palamas was concerned with the contemplation of the divine light within Neoplatonism, such as in proposition 143 of the *Elements of Theology*

> Πάντα τὰ καταδεέστερα τῇ παρουσίᾳ τῶν θεῶν ὑπεξίσταται· κἂν ἐπιτήδειον ᾖ τὸ μετέχον, πᾶν μὲν τὸ ἀλλότριον τοῦ θείου φωτὸς ἐκποδὼν γίνεται, καταλάμπεται δὲ πάντα ἀθρόως ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν.
>
> PROCLUS, *Elements of Theology* 143

> All inferior principles retreat before the presence of the gods; and provided the participant be fit for it reception, whatever is alien makes way for the divine light and all things are continuously illuminated by the gods.
>
> tr. DODDS

Interestingly Palamas takes exception not with the theory but with the object of the contemplation. From his point of view, if the content was not true to Christianity it was simply a false contemplation. The nature of such gazing is complicated since the Divine for Palamas is beyond, ἐπέκεινα as one may see in the following passage:

> Καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ παντὸς νοεροῦ φωτὸς ἐπέκεινα Θεὸς καὶ πάσης οὐσίας ὑπερουσίως ἐκβεβηκώς·
>
> GREOGORY PALAMAS, *Triads* 1.3.8.10
>
> And God himself who is above all intelligible light and stepping beyond all existence in a supra-essential way.

Such language is again familiar from Proclus, for example proposition 20 defines how the νοερός is below the level of the One.[18] Since the noetic level is connected with being, the divine is also beyond being as said here. Palamas proposes that what is seen is not the divine, but his energies. These had been first proposed by Maximus the Confessor in 634–638 and he had already employed Proclus to develop the theory.[19] Palamas explicitly quotes Maximus the Confessor as source of such an idea. Because of the details he has to clarify, the theory takes a whole new dimension. One may indicate here that the idea is that the activities may be contemplated but not the Divine itself. Thus, the divine light mentioned above would be considered by Palamas as being the uncreated light seen during the transfiguration of Jesus on Mt. Tabor. Psellos had already associated Proclus' *Elements* with the study of such perception.[20] Therefore one may see a direct link between the Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, Maximus the Confessor's *Ambiguum ad Thomam 5* and Palamas.

Psellos makes it easier to understand the link between these three thinkers. Within a Christian environment, one should not forget that when Saint Paul went to Athens to speak about the Ἄγνωστος θεός, the unknown God, he opened a problem which Psellos solves with the theory of λόγοι of Maximus and what would become the energies of Palamas:

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18 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, 20: Πάντων σωμάτων ἐπέκεινά ἐστιν ἡ ψυχῆς οὐσία, καὶ πασῶν ψυχῶν ἐπέκεινα ἡ νοερὰ φύσις, καὶ πασῶν τῶν νοερῶν ὑποστάσεων ἐπέκεινα τὸ ἕν. [*Beyond all bodies is the soul's essence; beyond all souls, the intellective principle; and beyond all intellective substances, the One.*—tr. Dodds].

19 Lauritzen (2012b).

20 Lauritzen (2012c).

> ὅθεν καὶ τὸν ἀμέθεκτον νοῦν νοερῶς νοεῖ—εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἀμέθεκτος, ἀλλ' ἐμφάσεις τινὰς δίδωσι τοῖς μετ' αὐτὸν τῆς ἰδίας ὑπάρξεως·—καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν δὲ καὶ τὰ φυσικὰ εἴδη νοερῶς οἶδεν.
>
> MICHAEL PSELLOS, *De omnifaria doctrina* 25.5–8
>
> Therefore it perceives the intellect intelligibly, for if it is unparticipated, nevertheless it gives manifestations of its own existence to those after it, and it knows the soul and the physical forms intelligibly.

One should also not forget that for the Byzantines the person who listened to Saint Paul was Dionysius the Areopagite, the first convert of Athens, and alleged writer of the most important philosophical treatises for any orthodox Byzantine of Psellos' era.

Therefore, one may conclude that the φυσικὴ θεωρία of Maximus and the contemplation of the divine energies described by Palamas have echoes of the *Elements of Theology*. Both these theories were important for the formation of Byzantine philosophy. The fact that the Byzantines used a pagan Neoplatonic text to explore ideas within a Christian environment indicates their belief in a single truth expressed by some pagans and some Christians. This brings us back to the introduction and the question of the history of Byzantine philosophy. It is essential to study texts such as the *Elements of Theology* which were accepted by a variety of thinkers rather than isolated circles of intellectuals. Nicholas of Methone describes a veritable fashion for Proclus in the twelfth century.[21] It is also important to study ideas which were deemed acceptable by their contemporaries also at an official level. This does not endorse the dominant culture but allows one to study those who are eccentric within their own context. It is surprising how popular condemned thinkers are in the secondary literature. One may list a few here: John Philoponus (680),[22] John Italos (1082),[23] Barlaam of Calabria (1341),[24] Gregory Acyndinos (1347),[25] Nicephorus Gregoras (1351),[26] Prochoros[27] and Demetrios Cydones (1368)[28] and even cardinal Bessar-

21 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, Proem., p. 20–22: ὅπερ ἵνα μὴ πάθωσι καὶ τῶν νῦν πολλοὶ προνοούμενος, ὅσοι τὰ Πρόκλου τοῦ Λυκίου κεφάλαια σπουδῆς ἄξια κρίνουσιν, ἅπερ αὐτῷ Θεολογικὴ Στοιχείωσις ἐπιγράφεται.

22 *Concilium Constantinopoitanum Tertium*, in *Acta conciliorum* 11.480.14–16.

23 *Synodikon*, p. 184–246.

24 *Synodikon*, p. 572–633.

25 *Synodikon*, p. 572–633.

26 *Synodikon*, p. 640–646.

27 *Synodikon*, p. 647–665.

28 *Synodikon*, p. 666–682.

ion. These figures have become more popular in western scholarship than their counterparts, who are often unpublished and unedited. This fact says much about a certain lack of interest in such ideas that unify official thinkers. The example presented here gives continuity between Proclus, Maximus the Confessor, Michael Psellos and Gregory Palamas, philosophers who defined their own times as well as Byzantine culture in subsequent generations and therefore have an essential role also in the opinions of those who disagree with them.

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CHAPTER 3

Universals, Wholes, *Logoi*: Eustratios of Nicaea's Response to Proclus' *Elements of Theology*

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Not much is known about the life of Eustratios of Nicaea (ca. 1050-ca. 1120). He is mentioned in documents concerning the trial of the eleventh-century Byzantine philosopher John Italos as a pupil of the defendant, and he is mentioned in Anna Comnena's *Alexiad* as an expert in religious and secular letters and as a master of dialectic.[1] It has been suggested that he was a member of Anna's intellectual *équipe* which had been assigned the task of writing commentaries on Aristotle's works that had not previously been commented upon.[2] We know at least that he was a prominent churchman who became Metropolitan of Nicaea in the early twelfth century and was asked by emperor Alexios I to participate in theological debates with the Latin church. However, he was finally condemned for heresy in 1117 largely on account of his views on Christology.[3]

Our discussion of Eustratios will be centred on two texts that deal in a very fundamental way with the relation between Aristotelianism and Platonism in the mind of this twelfth-century Byzantine thinker. The first comes from his *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* and is embedded in a discussion of Plato's Idea of the Good, while the second occurs in his *Commentary on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* and is concerned with the nature of genera and species. These texts have been at the centre of numerous discussions among modern scholars concerning the doctrine of universals held by Eustratios, although the results of these discussions seem to have been for the most part inconclusive.[4] The present paper will attempt to cast some fresh light on this question by reading the two texts perhaps for the first in the context of Proclus' philosophy as represented especially by the latter's *Elements of Theology*. It is by now well known that Proclus and Aristotle where the two Greek philosophers most

1 Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 14. 8.
2 Browning 1962, p. 1–12.
3 For a recent general introduction to Eustratios with extensive bibliography of earlier work see Trizio 2014, p. 190–201.
4 Among the most important contributions are Giocarinis 1964 and Ierodiakonou 2005.

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extensively discussed by Byzantine thinkers beginning at least in the time of Michael Psellos and continuing down to that of the Palamite controversies.[5]

1 Eustratios' Theory of Universals and Proclus *Elements of Theology*

In the first section of the passage from the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*,[6] Eustratios contrasts Aristotle's notion of an abstracted universal with the Platonic notion of a transcendent form, in the language of the Neopla-

5 Although the *Elements of Theology* was by far Proclus' most well-known work among Byzantine thinkers, it remained highly controversial. Having been introduced into circulation by Psellos and discussed extensively by other writers taught by or influenced by Psellos such as John Italos and Eustratios, the work subsequently gave rise to a forceful counter-attack in the *Refutation* (*Anaptyxis*) *of Proclus' Elements of Theology by* Nicholas of Methone (?–ca. 1166). For a survey of its influence in Byzantium see Gersh 2014b, p. 5–22.

6 Eustratios, *In Ethica Nicomachea*, I. 4, 40. 18–34: "Now the universal is referred to not in the sense employed in logical investigations, for in the latter case the universal is that which is "upon the many" and "later-born," whereas in the former case it is that which is "before the many" as established prior to them while they receive their subsistence in relation to it. This is what the Platonists were asserting when they introduced certain reason-principles which are enhypostatic, divine, and intellectual and in relation to which they maintained that all materiate things exist and come to be. They also called these reason-principles "forms," "ideas," "wholes," and "universals." They held that these were established prior to those forms in bodies, being transcendent above all of them and existing in the discursive thinking of the divine craftsman who imprints certain other things in accordance with them in matter. These reason-principles were said to be universals and wholes because each of them, being one, has many things that come to be in body and are materiate as derived from it and in accordance with it. In relation to the many things, each pre-existing reason-principle was said to be a universal and a whole not in a conceptual but in an intellectual manner, being universal in the sense of existing as transcendent with respect to the many which have come to be in accordance with it, and being whole in the sense of being in a proportional relation to the arranged parts that are referred to it as a whole. It is neither compounded from the parts nor conceived upon the parts, but exists prior to them and remains in itself, having the parts referred back to it as though to their own proper wholeness." (νῦν τὸ καθόλου οὐχ ὡς ἐν ταῖς λογικαῖς θεωρίαις λέγεται· ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ ὑστερογενές, ἐνταῦθα δὲ τὸ πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν ὡς προυφεστηκὸς αὐτῶν κἀκείνων πρὸς αὐτὸ δεχομένων τὴν ὕπαρξιν. οὕτω γὰρ οἱ περὶ Πλάτωνα ἔλεγον, λόγους τινὰς ἐπεισαγαγόντες ἐνυποστάτους θείους νοερούς, πρὸς οὓς ἔλεγον πάντα τὰ ἔνυλα εἶναι καὶ γίνεσθαι, οὓς καὶ εἴδη καὶ ἰδέας ἐκάλουν καὶ ὅλα καὶ καθόλου, προυφεστηκότας μὲν τῶνδε τῶν ἐν σώμασιν εἰδῶν, ἐξηρημένους δὲ τούτων ἁπάντων, ἐν τῇ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ θεοῦ διανοίᾳ ὄντας, ἕτερά τινα κατ' αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ χαράττοντος. καθόλου δὲ καὶ ὅλα ταῦτα ἐλέγετο, ὅτι ἕκαστον ἐκείνων ἓν ὂν ἔχει πολλὰ ἐξ ἐκείνου καὶ κατ' ἐκεῖνο γινόμενα ἐν σώματι καὶ ἔνυλα, πρὸς ἃ ἐκεῖνο καθόλου καὶ ὅλον ἐλέγετο οὐκ ἐννοηματικῶς ἀλλὰ νοερῶς· καθόλου μὲν ὡς ὑπάρχον πολλοῖς ἐξῃρημένον ἃ κατ' ἐκεῖνο γεγένηται, ὅλον δὲ ὡς ἐν λόγῳ μερῶν τεταγμένων ἃ πρὸς ἐκεῖνο ἀναφέρεται ὡς πρὸς ὅλον, οὐκ ἐξ αὐτῶν συγκείμενον οὐδ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἐννοούμενον, ἀλλὰ πρὸ αὐτῶν μὲν ὄν καὶ μένον καθ' αὑτό, ἐκεῖνα δ' ἔχον ἀναφερόμενα πρὸς αὐτὸ ὡς πρὸς οἰκείαν ὁλότητα).

tonic commentators of late antiquity calling the former the universal "upon the many" (ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς)[7] or the "later-born" (ὑστερογενές) universal and the latter the universal "before the many" (πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν). Throughout this passage he identifies a "universal" (καθόλου) with a "whole" (ὅλον). For the most part, he concentrates on describing the Platonic universal or whole, characterizing this as a reason-principle, form, or Idea which is enhypostatic, divine, transcendent, and intellectual—being in the reasoning of the divine Craftsman. This transcendent principle is called a "universal" because things come to be "according to" it;[8] it is called a "whole" because things are referred to it as though to their own wholeness and according to a certain reason-principle. At the same time, Eustratios seems to assume an identification of the Aristotelian abstracted universal with a Platonic *immanent* form. Thus, he contrasts the transcendent form with a form instantiated in matter or an embodied form, the latter acquiring its subsistence "according to" (κατά) the former. He also explains the causal relation between the transcendent form and the embodied form by saying that the divine Craftsman imprints the latter "according to" (κατά) the former.

In the course of describing the transcendent and embodied forms and the relation between them, Eustratios introduces some further important ideas by way of contrast. Thus, the transcendent form relates to the embodied form not "conceptually" (ἐννοηματικῶς)—that is, as an Aristotelian abstracted universal relates to a particular—but "intellectually" (νοερῶς)–presumably, as the divine Craftsmen pre-contains his effects. Moreover, the "whole" represented by the transcendent form relates to things called its "parts" not as conceived "upon" (ἐπί) a number of items—that is, in the manner of an Aristotelian abstracted universal—nor as assembled "from" (ἐξ) a number of parts. In order to understand this last point, Eustratios now introduces an important conceptual distinction.[9]

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7 The translation of the Greek preposition ἐπί is problematic in this context. The present author's reasons for settling upon the sense of "upon" will emerge in the discussion below.

8 An etymological connection κατὰ + καθόλου is implied.

9 Eustratios, *In Ethica Nicomachea*, I. 4, 40. 34–41. 12: "They say that "whole" is referred to in three ways: as "before the parts," as "of the parts," and as "in the parts." The much-discussed forms are said to be wholes before the parts because each of them has been established before the many things that have come to be in accordance with it, these forms being most simple and immaterial. Composite things and things divided into many are said to be wholes of the parts, whether they are *homoeomerous* as a stone in relation to stones is a whole in relation to the parts into which the stone is divided—each part taking up the name and the reason-principle of the whole—, or whether they are *anomoeomerous* as a man is divided into hands, feet, and head—none of the man's parts being similar to the whole, inasmuch as it receives neither the name nor the reason-principle of the whole. Those things that are also said to be "upon the many" and "later-born," as are conceptual things, are said to be wholes in the parts. These are

According to the Platonists, there are three kinds of whole. The first kind of whole is the whole *before the parts* and corresponds to the transcendent Platonic form which has already been described in detail. The second kind of whole is the whole *of parts*. Here, Eustratios gives two illustrations that are, at first sight, easy enough to understand: namely, a *homoeomerous* whole whose parts have the same reason-principle as the whole (for instance, stone with parts that are stones) and an *anomoeomerous* whole whose parts do not have the same reason-principle as the whole (for instance, man with parts that are head and hand). The third kind of whole is the whole *in the parts*. It is here that the problems of interpretation arise because of Eustratios' apparent identification of the whole *in the parts* with the universal *upon the many* discussed in the previous paragraph, the former seeming to correspond more to the Platonic embodied form and the latter more to the Aristotelian abstracted universal. Undoubtedly, the explanation of the phrase "upon the many" as referring to things that are substantialized in the soul with reference to the subsistence of the many, of the phrase "later-born" as denoting the process in which the soul contemplates particulars that are identical or similar in form and have been previously[10] established in bodies, and of the phrase "conceptual" as referring

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"later-born" because the soul which has contemplated particular things that have the same or similar forms previously established in bodies, and which has in itself given substance to that reason-principle that has been contemplated in its generality according to an abstraction from matter, then refers this reason-principle suitably to itself: that is to say, in a rational and cognitive manner. These wholes in the parts are "conceptual" because such wholenesses have their substance up to the limit of conceptuality and are in no way existent in actuality aside from the particulars from which they have been taken. They are "in the parts" because the things said about them appear in the particulars in relation to which they are also said to be wholenesses. They are "upon the many" because the soul has in itself given substance to them after the subsistence of the many." (τριχῶς γάρ φασι λέγεσθαι τὸ ὅλον, πρὸ τῶν μερῶν ἐκ τῶν μερῶν καὶ ἐν τοῖς μέρεσι. πρὸ τῶν μερῶν μὲν ἐκεῖνα τὰ εἴδη, ὅτι πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν ἕκαστον ἐκείνων ὑφέστηκεν ἃ πρὸς ἐκεῖνο γέγονεν, ἁπλούστατα ὄντα καὶ ἄυλα· ἐκ τῶν μερῶν δὲ τὰ σύνθετα καὶ εἰς πολλὰ μεριζόμενα, εἴθ' ὁμοιομερῆ ὡς λίθος εἰς λίθους ὅλον ὃν πρὸς μέρη εἰς ἃ καὶ διαιρετός ἐστιν, ὧν ἕκαστον τό τε ὄνομα καὶ τὸν λόγον τοῦ ὅλου ἐπιδέχεται, εἴτ' ἀνομοιομερῆ ὡς ἄνθρωπος εἰς χεῖρας πόδας κεφαλήν· οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν μερῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὅμοιον τῷ ὅλῳ, ὡς μήτε τοὔνομα μήτε τὸν λόγον τοῦ ὅλου δεχόμενον· ἐν τοῖς μέρεσι δέ, ὡς τὰ ἐννοηματικά, ἃ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς πόλλοις καὶ ὑστερογενῆ λέγεται· ὑστερογενῆ μὲν ὅτι τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα ὁμοειδῆ ἢ ὁμογενῆ ἡ ψυχὴ θεωρήσασα πρότερον ὑφεστηκότα ἐν σώμασι καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς κοινῶς θεωρούμενον λόγον κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης ἐν ἑαυτῇ ὑποστήσασα, ἐπιφέρεται τοῦτον οἰκείως ἑαυτῇ, ἤγουν λογικῶς καὶ ἐπιστημονικῶς· ἐννοηματικὰ δέ, ὅτι μέχρις ἐννοίας τὴν ὑπόστασιν αἱ τοιαῦται ὁλότητες ἔχουσι, μηδαμῇ χωρὶς τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα ἐξ ὧν καὶ ἐλήφθησαν ἐνεργείᾳ οὖσαι· ἐν τοῖς μέρεσι δέ, ὅτι ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστα, πρὸς ἃ καὶ ὁλότητες λέγονται, τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν λεγόμενα ἀναφαίνεται· ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς δέ, ὅτι μετὰ τὴν ὕπαρξιν τῶν πολλῶν αὐτὰ ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἡ ψυχὴ ὑπεστήσατο.)

10 The temporal connotation of course emerges in the prefix of the term ὑστερογενές.

to things that are substantialized to the extent that they are thought—all these are consistent with the understanding of this whole as an Aristotelian abstracted universal. The suggestion that this whole is in no way actual aside from the particulars from which it is taken perhaps indicates a nominalist shift in the understanding of Aristotle. By contrast, the suggestion that the common element substantialized by the soul is a reason-principle that can be brought into agreement with the soul points—as we shall see below—to a kind of realism. It is presumably because of Eustratios' apparent combination of the Platonic embodied form with the Aristotelian abstracted universal that this epistemological ambiguity or flexibility becomes possible.

We now turn from the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* to the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* where there is another discussion of the three kinds of whole.[11] According to Eustratios' explanation here the whole

11 Eustratios, *In Analyticorum posteriorum librum secundum*, B. 13, 195. 27–196. 16: "And the whole is referred to in three ways: either as "before the parts" or as "of the parts" or as "in the part." The wholes that are before the parts, as the Platonists say, are the primal monads from each of which the number coordinate with it is generated, the monad itself being unparticipated, the many being generated from it according to a procession. These many are also said to be parts of the monad in the sense that the latter is a cause prior to them. They are said in their totality to divide up the subsistence derived from the monad through its extension into multiplicity and in their totality to refer back to the subsistence as to something monadic, primal, and transcendent with respect to the things derived from it. The collection of all these is a whole of parts as though assembled part by part from those monads. Moreover, each of these monads from which the multiplicity arises is a whole in the part, for a particular man being a part of man *simpliciter*, carries around in himself the whole and integral reason-principle of man *simpliciter*, and is a whole in the part as having the whole as a whole in the part of the whole according to the reason-principle. A species is a whole as though compounded from the parts ranged under it, and again the genus a whole as compounded from its species in the sense that, if a species is lacking, the whole that is the genus is maimed, and if any of the particulars is lacking, the whole that is the species is maimed. This will not occur according to its own proper reason-principles, for "living creature" will not be maimed according to its being a substance, ensouled, and sensitive, if horse, ox, or some other of the species ranged under it is missing, just as "man" will not be maimed according to his being a living creature, terrestrial, and bipedal, if Socrates or Plato is missing. Rather, the genus or species is maimed because the things that are universal in this way—that is, as conceptual—have their being and their actuality in embracing the things ranged under them and being predicated of them. If any of the things ranged under them is missing, the conceptual universals are maimed according to the missing component, for they do not embrace it and are not predicated of it. Such wholes are also said to be in the parts as being contemplated as wholes in the things ranged under them according to their own proper reason-principles. For the genus is a whole in relation to the species and the species a whole in relation to the particulars not as a foot or a hand is a whole, but as imparting themselves as wholes to the things ranged below them and as being contemplated as wholes in the latter." (λέγεται δὲ καὶ τὸ

before the parts is not the Platonic transcendent form as described in the earlier passage but something apparently equivalent to it: namely, an originative monad or an unparticipated term. The nature of the "parts" with respect to which this transcendent monad or form can be called a "whole" is explained in the next stage of Eustratios' explanation. Thus, the whole *of parts* is the entire collection of the monads which proceed from the originative monad, stretch out its subsistence, and are referred back to it whereas the whole *in the part* is each individual monad within the entire collection proceeding from the originative monad.[12] The commentator provides as convenient examples of the whole before the parts and whole in the part "man *simpliciter*" and "a particular man" respectively. However, it is when he shifts his attention from collections of monads to genera and species that the passage becomes harder to interpret. According to Eustratios, genera and species are both wholes of parts in that these universals as conceptual have their being and activity in being predicated of the things below them, and also wholes in the part in that they are contemplated as wholes according to a reason-principle in the things below them. As in the earlier passage, the commentator is clearly thinking of genera and species first in terms of the Aristotelian abstracted universals and then secondly in terms of a Platonic embodied form.

ὅλον τριχῶς, ἢ ὡς πρὸ τῶν μερῶν ἢ ὡς ἐκ τῶν μερῶν ἢ ὡς ἐν τῷ μέρει. αἱ μὲν οὖν πρὸ τῶν μερῶν ὁλοτήτες, ὡς οἱ περὶ Πλάτωνα λέγουσιν, αἱ ἀρχικαὶ μονάδες εἰσίν, ἐχ ὧν ἐκάστης ὁ σύστοιχος αὐτῇ ἀριθμὸς ἀπογεννᾶται, μονάδος μὲν οὔσης αὐτῆς ἀμεθέκτου, πολλῶν δ' ἐξ αὐτῆς κατὰ πρόοδον γεννωμένων, αἳ καὶ μέρη ἐκείνης λέγονται, ὡς ἐκείνης μὲν οὔσης αἰτίας πρὸ αὐτῶν. τούτων δὲ πασῶν μεριζομένων τὴν ἐξ αὐτῆς ὕπαρξιν διὰ τὸ εἰς πλῆθος ἐκτείνεσθαι, καὶ πασῶν ἀναφερομένων εἰς ἐκείνην ὡς εἰς μοναδικήν τε καὶ ἀρχικὴν καὶ ὑπερκειμένην τῶν ἐξ αὐτῆς. τὸ δὲ ἐκ πάντων ἄθροισμα ὅλον ἐστὶν ὡς ἐκ μερῶν τῶν κατὰ μέρος τούτων μονάδων συντεθειμένον. ἑκάστη δὲ τῶν μονάδων τούτων, ἐξ ὧν τὸ πλῆθος, ὅλον ἐν τῷ μέρει ἐστίν· ὁ γάρ τις ἄνθρωπος, μέρος ὢν τοῦ ἁπλῶς ἀνθρώπου, ὅλον ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ ἀνελλιπῆ τὸν ἐκείνου περιφέρει λόγον, καὶ ὅλον ἐν τῷ μέρει ἐστίν ὡς ἐν τῷ μέρει τοῦ ὅλου ὅλον ἔχων τὸ ὅλον κατὰ τὸν λόγον. τὸ δὲ εἶδος ὅλον ὡς ἐκ μερῶν τῶν ὑπ' αὐτο συγκείμενον, καὶ τὸ γένος αὖθις ἐκ τῶν εἰδῶν· ὡς εἰ εἶδος ἐπιλείπει, κολοβοῦσθαι τὸ ὡς γένος ὅλον, καὶ εἰ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστά τι, κολοβοῦσθαι τὸ ὡς εἶδος ὅλον οὐ κατὰ τοὺς οἰκείους λόγους (οὐ γὰρ καθὸ οὐσία ἔμψυχος αἰσθητικὴ τὸ ζῷον κολοβωθήσεται, εἰ ἵππος ἐπιλείποι ἢ βοῦς ἤ τι τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὸ εἰδῶν ἕτερον, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ᾗ ζῷον πεζὸν δίπουν ὁ ἄνθρωπος, Σωκράτους ἐπιλείποντος ἢ Πλάτωνος), ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τὰ οὕτω καθόλου ὡς ἐννοηματικὰ ἐν τούτῳ ἔχει τὸ εἶναι καὶ ἐνεργεῖν, ἐν τῷ περιέχειν τὰ ὑπ' αὐτὸ καὶ κατηγορεῖσθαι αὐτῶν, εἴ τι ἐπιλείποι τῶν ὑπ' αὐτά, κεκολόβωται κατὰ τὸ λεῖψαν, ἐκεῖνο μὴ περιέχοντα μήτε μὴν ἐκείνου κατηγορούμενα. λέγονται δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα ὅλα καὶ ἐν τοῖς μέρεσιν ὡς ἐν τοῖς ὑπ'αὐτὰ θεωρούμενα ὅλα κατὰ τοὺς οἰκείους αὐτῶν λόγους· οὐ γὰρ ὡς ποὺς ἢ χείρ, οὕτω τὸ γένος ὅλον πρὸς τὸ εἶδος, ἤ τὸ εἶδος πρὸς τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα, ἀλλ' ὥς ὅλων ἑαυτῶν μεταδιδόντα τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτὰ καὶ ὅλα ἐν αὐτοῖς θεωρούμενα).

12 As the threefold classification of wholes is generally applied, there does not seem to be any significant conceptual distinction between "whole in the parts" (plural)—as in the earlier text—and "whole in the part" (singular)—as in the present instance.

The threefold division of wholes into wholes before the parts, wholes of the parts, and wholes in the parts that is foregrounded in Eustratios' discussions and the twofold division of universals into universals before the many and universals in the many that is also suggested there can perhaps be usefully compared with the classifications of wholes and universals proposed in certain propositions of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* and in the two-part prologue to Proclus' *Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements* that may strike the reader as being quite similar. Comparison with the first text will provide a more detailed account of the three kinds of whole and comparison with the second the addition of a third kind of universal to the earlier two, both comparisons allowing us to envisage the possibility of merging the threefold divisions of wholes and universals.

A proposition[13] in the *Elements of Theology* states that every "wholeness" (ὁλότης) is either a whole "before the parts" (πρὸ τῶν μερῶν), a whole "of parts" (ἐκ τῶν μερῶν), or a whole "in the part" (ἐν τῷ μέρει). The proof adds that the whole before the parts is the form of each thing "contemplated" (θεωρεῖσθαι) in its cause or alternatively the form "pre-established" (προυποστάν) in its cause; the whole of parts is the form contemplated in all the parts "together" (ὁμοῦ)—withdrawal of any part diminishes the whole—whereas the whole in the part is the form contemplated in each part—where even the part becomes a whole "in a partial way" (μερικῶς). In the cases of both the whole of parts and the whole in the part the parts participate in the whole before the parts. Further, the whole before the parts is a whole "according to cause" (κατ'αἰτίαν), the whole of parts is a whole "according to existence" (καθ'ὕπαρξιν), and the whole in the part is a whole "according to participation" (κατὰ μέθεξιν). Finally, the whole in the part "at the lowest level" (κατ'ἐσχάτην ὕφεσιν) is still a whole because it "imitates" (μιμεῖται) the whole of parts. Although Eustratios in citing the same doctrine only makes a vague attribution to Greek philosophy with the phrase "they say" (φασι) and could therefore be referring to Proclus, an Aristotelian commentator, or some other authority, there are good reasons for thinking that he is depending directly on the first-mentioned.[14] Apart from certain peculiar phraseology that explicitly recalls the Athenian Successor, a more explicit connection with Proclus' *Elements* is made in a somewhat similar context by his teacher John Italos.[15]

13 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 67, proof 64. 1–2.

14 Steel 2002 showed on the basis of precise textual parallels that Eustratios knew and used Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*.

15 See Ierodiakonou 2009.

Now it must be admitted that Proclus does not in the quoted proposition and proof identify the threefold division of wholes with the threefold division of *universals*. However, the propositions which immediately follow the propositions dealing with the threefold division of wholes in the *Elements of Theology* do connect wholes with universals in a general way. Here, Proclus draws a series of distinctions with respect to causality between higher and lower principles and with respect to participations between lower and higher principles by speaking of terms that are "more whole / universal" (ὁλικώτερα) and "more partial / particular" (μερικώτερα),[16] and then goes on to show on the assumption that every "form / species" (εἶδος) is a whole but not every whole is a form/species that whole is a broader category within which universal is to be placed.[17] Moreover, in the prologue to his *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*,[18] Proclus explicitly invokes a threefold division of universals. Here, he states that every "universal" (καθόλου)—defined as "a one that includes a many" (ἕν … τῶν πολλῶν περιληπτικόν)–is either "in particulars" (ἐν τοῖς καθ'ἕκαστα), having a "subsistence inseparable" (ὕπαρξις … ἀχώριστος) from them, and moving or at rest together with them; or else "prior to the many" (πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν), producing the latter by "offering its appearances" (ἔμφασεις … παρέχον) to them and "being causal with respect to their participations" (μεθέξεις … χορηγοῦν); or else formed from the many "according to thought" (κατ'ἐπίνοιαν), having "subsistence generated upon them" (ὕπαρξις ἐπιγενηματική), and "gaining consistency upon the many in a later-born manner" (ὑστερογενῶς ἐπισυνίστασθαι τοῖς πόλλοις).[19]

16 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, props. 70–72.

17 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 74, 70. 15–16.

18 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 50. 16–51. 9. In addition, the proof includes definitions of both "whole" and of "form / species."

19 The threefold division suggested in this passage seems to lie behind a standard gloss on Porphyry's *Isagoge* that is found in numerous Aristotelian commentators from Ammonius onwards. See Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, 39. 8–42. 26; 68. 25–69. 11; 104. 27–105. 14. Cf. Elias, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, 45. 26–48. 30; David, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, 113. 11–116. 2; Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 19. 31–34; Philoponus, *In Categorias*, 9. 3–12—this list of references being not exhaustive. The passage in Ammonius' *Commentary on the Isagoge* introducing the Proclean distinction (*In Porphyrii Isagogen*, 41. 10–20) is of particular interest because of the illustration that it includes. The commentator asks us to imagine a ring with a seal which can be pressed on different pieces of wax. If someone enters a room and sees the imprints on the different pieces of wax, having realised [*a*] that these imprints have common characteristics and [b] that they are made by one and the same seal, he will [c] retain the common characteristics in his mind. In this illustration, the imprints on the different pieces of wax represent the universal in the many, the seal on the ring the universal before the many, and the image retained the universal upon the many. Given that the observer connects the common characteristics [*a*] with the single seal [*b*], Ammonius

Now, by combining these texts we can conclude that Proclus has shown that there are three kinds of whole: before the parts, of the parts, and in the parts; that the theory of wholes is closely related to the theory of universals; and that there are three kinds of universals: before the many, upon the many, and in the many.[20] However, it is clearly not possible on this basis and without more ado to combine the three kinds of wholes with the three kinds of universals and present this combination as part of an interpretation of Eustratios' doctrine in the commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Posterior Analytics*. In Eustratios, although the whole before the parts is identifiable with the universal before the many, the whole of the parts does not correspond exactly to any of the types of universal but rather to a relation—that of genus to species—between different instances of one type of universal that is otherwise unspecified, while the whole in the parts is identifiable with both the universal upon the many (as an Aristotelian abstracted universal) and the universal in the many (as a Platonic immanent form).

However, given that Eustratios' arguments do exhibit striking similarities with those of Proclus, is it possible to resolve some of the interpretative problems that we have seen in connection with the former by appealing to this late antique antecedent? The remainder of this paper will be devoted to arguing that this is the case and will thereby attempt to break some new ground in the scholarly debate.

However, it is worth prefacing this discussion with some observations regarding the epistemological basis of Proclus' treatment of universals in his understanding of psychology in the *Commentary on the Timaeus*. This is set out in his lengthy explanation of the lemma dealing with Timaeus' statement that the realm of becoming is grasped by a combination of opinion and sensation,[21] and especially in the passage explaining the application of the phrase: "by opinion together with irrational sensation" (δόξῃ μετ' αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου). According to Proclus, there is a "series" (σειρά) of cognitive faculties containing three terms in descending metaphysical order: *1*. intellection, which is "above *logos*" (ὑπὲρ λόγον), *2*. *logos* itself or discursive reason, and *3*. opinion, which is "knowledge of sensible things in accordance with *logos*" (κατὰ λόγον … γνῶσις τῶν αἰσθητῶν).[22] The further characterization of the last member of this series is particularly important, for Proclus here explains that opinion is partly accord-

account of the Aristotelian abstracted universal is already shifted in the direction of Platonism. In other words, it implies the application of *logos* theory to be discussed below.

20 Or at least words to that effect.

21 Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I. 240. 13–16.

22 For now, we will leave the word *logos* untranslated. See further below.

ing to reason because it has "*logoi* cognitive of substances" (λόγοι γνωστικοὶ τῶν οὐσιῶν) and partly irrational because it does not know "the causes" (αἱ αἰτίαι). He also contrasts this last cognitive faculty with the lower non-cognitive faculty of sensation. Whereas each of the five senses constituting the latter grasps "one aspect of its object" (ἕν τι τῶν περὶ αὐτό)–and even the common sense merely distinguishes between these features—, opinion knows that "the whole object has a substance of such and such a kind" (τοιάνδε ἔχον ἐστὶν οὐσίαν τὸ ὅλον) and also knows "the whole as though before the parts" (τὸ ὅλον … πρὸ τῶν οἱονεὶ μερῶν).[23] From this description, we can conclude that it is with the faculty of opinion that the soul's apprehension of the wholes or universals discussed in the texts considered earlier really begins. Given that he states with careful qualification that opinion knows the whole—as opposed to merely disconnected sensory affections–*as though* before the parts, it is probably safe to assume that Proclus is not rejecting the more obvious assumption that perception of wholes and universals by the faculty of opinion would begin with wholes *in the part*, but is rather attempting to delineate the fundamental difference between partial and holistic approaches to the external objects of perception as such.

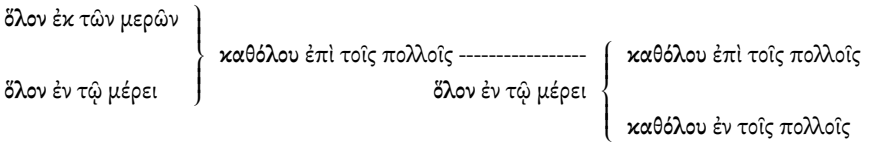
2 Proclus' Theory of Universals and *Logoi*

To return to the philosophical problems that appeared in connection with Eustratios' account of wholes and universals, we can leave aside the relatively unproblematic identification of the whole before the parts with the universal before the many as representing the Platonic transcendent forms. However, the problems of interpretation with respect to the second and third terms in the threefold schema of wholes clearly need further investigation.[24] Here, the main difficulties are that, although the two types of whole are ostensibly to be associated simply with the two types of universal, Eustratios in the passage from the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* apparently identified both the Aristotelian abstracted universal and the Platonic embodied form with the whole *in the part* and the universal *upon the many*, whereas in the passage from the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* he identified the Aristotelian abstracted universal—in the sense of genera and species—with both the whole *of*

23 Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I. 248. 29–249. 27.

24 Later we will turn to an analogous problem with the (metaphysically) higher part of the threefold schema.

parts and the whole *in the parts* while at the same time identifying a collection of Platonic monads with the whole *of parts* and an individual monad with a whole *in the parts*. Reading these two texts in conjunction leads to even greater difficulties, since we now realize that the universal upon the many—the Aristotelian abstracted universal in the first instance—is to be identified with both the whole of parts and the whole in the parts and further that the whole in the parts—the Platonic embodied form in the first instance—is to be identified with both the universal upon the many and the universal in the many. The relations between the two kinds of universal and the two kinds of whole might be represented by the following schema:



However, the approach of Eustratios can perhaps be justified on the basis of Proclus' own treatment of wholes and universals which seems to make three important moves: first, it treats the universal in the many—Eustratios' whole in the parts—as the embodied Platonic form; second, it treats the universal upon the many—still Eustratios' whole in the parts—as a mediation of the embodied Platonic form with an element not so far considered: an internal reason-principle of the soul; third, it treats the universal upon the many—now Eustratios' whole of parts—as the "projection" of the reason-principle itself—, thereby turning what would become for the Byzantine commentator a twofold division of whole in the parts and whole of parts into a threefold division of whole in the parts, whole in the parts *plus* universal upon the many, and whole of parts.[25] The insertion of a mediating term is not only typical of the Proclean metaphysical approach in general but also in this specific context changes the Aristotelian later-born universal—which he henceforth treats as a mere phantasm—into a *Platonic* later-born universal—now underpinned by the reality of a psychic reason-principle.

These developments are set out most clearly in Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides* where he comments on the lemma[26] dealing with Socrates' suggestion that a form is a "thought" (νόημα) coming to be in the soul. Proclus notes initially that this agrees with the Peripatetics' notion of a form as "later-born"

25 On Proclus' epistemology one may now consult the studies by Helmig 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011.

26 Proclus, *In Parmenidem*, IV. 891–897.

(τὸ ὑστερογενές) but that there is a difference between this and that which he terms the "psychic reason-principle" (ὁ ψυχικὸς λόγος). This reason-principle resides substantially in souls. By looking towards this the soul *is* all the forms and is the place of the forms, is present not only potentially but actually (in the first meaning of actuality), and is "substantial" (οὐσιῶδες) and "more substantial" than the many (μᾶλλον). On the other hand, the later-born is dimmer than the many inasmuch as it "arises from them" (ἐπ'αὐτοῖς), and is "less substantial than the many" (ἧττον οὐσία τῶν πολλῶν).

Having stated the fundamental difference between Aristotelian and Platonic approaches to universals, Proclus proceeds to expand the threefold division of wholes or universals first, by *tracing back the Platonic embodied form to the notion of reason-principle*. He does this by contrasting the manner in which a physical reason-principle is a "basis of coherence of the many" (συνεκτικὸν τῶν πόλλων) and that in which the later-born is "upon the many" (ἐπὶ τοῖς πόλλοις), noting in the process that the former underlies the "form residing in matter" (τὸ ἐν ὕλῃ κείμενον εἶδος) and that it is the latter which knows things on a general level (κοινῶς). Thus, the embodied Platonic form is replaced by an internal principle of coherence based on a reason-principle. In the course of the same discussion, Proclus now *treats the universal upon the many as the mediation of the embodied Platonic form with the soul's internal reason-principles*. His approach can be seen by noting his remark that the "universal in the many" (τὸ καθόλου τὸ ἐν τοῖς πόλλοις) is less than each of the individuals since the latter are amplified by accidents, whereas the later-born—as the universal upon the many is here characterized—must comprehend each of the many in being predicated of them. This remark should be combined with his further comment that the psychic generality just mentioned must be derived not from the common quality in the many but from some other source of which it is an "image" (εἰκὼν), coming into existence through "recollection of the causal principle aroused within" (ἀνάμνησις … τῆς ἔνδον ἀνακινουμενης αἰτίας) on the basis of things appearing. In commenting on the same lemma, Proclus *finally treats the universal upon the many as the "projection" of the soul's internal reason-principles themselves*. Here, he notes that rational souls "generate these universals" (γεννῶσι ταῦτα τὰ καθόλου) and progress from sensible things to opinable things by having reason-principles of things, and that those who know things "on a general level" (κοινῶς) contemplate their "generalities" (κοινότητες) through "preembracing" (προειληφέναι) these reason-principles.[27] Thus, prior to the so–

27 According to the faculty psychology of the *Commentary on the Timaeus* explained earlier, in treating the universal upon the many as the projection of the reason-principles them-

called later-born there must be "substantial reason-principles" (οὐσιώδεις λόγοι) which are "eternally projected" (ἀεὶ προβεβλημένοι) and efficacious in the divine souls superior to us but are "sometimes" (ποτέ) obscured and sometimes active in us.

It should be apparent by now that a major component in Proclus' strategy of handling the threefold division of wholes and universals (together with the expansion suggested) is the introduction of something distinct from both the wholes and the universals themselves: namely, the reason-principles. What precisely are these reason-principles and how do they function? These questions are far too complicated to deal with adequately under the present restrictions of space. However, it is at least possible to summarize the main points of Proclus' doctrine of the reason-principle that are relevant to the present discussion of the theory of universals on the basis of some passages from the *Elements of Theology* and the *Commentary on Euclid*.[28] These two texts have not only already provided some essential background to the discussion of wholes and universals in Eustratios but also most clearly exemplify the *mathematical* understanding of the reason-principle which is probably its most important feature. Indeed, Eustratios' explanation of the three wholes in terms of monads and numbers in the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* shows that mathematical and dialectical notions are inextricably linked in his mind.

Now considered on its most fundamental level, *logos* is conceived by the Neoplatonists as almost synonymous with relation: a fact which in itself helps to explain the difficulty of coming to grips with it. Relation in its turn has a peculiar status in their philosophy being conceived in different contexts both as a hypostasis and not a hypostasis.[29] This second problem might be summarized as follows: Given the existence of two existent principles *x* and *y* and the relation between them *R*, we have to ask about the nature of *R*. If it is an existent, then there were really three principles to begin with. If it is not an existent, then there was really no relation between the two original principles. This kind of conundrum about relation explains why it is difficult to say whether the world's *Logos* in Plotinus' *Third Ennead* is a hypostasis or not, and why Proclus' theological system seems like an endless multiplication of triads. At any rate, from Plotinus onwards the notion of *logos* is predominantly associated if not identified with the hypostasis of soul and especially with the nature that

selves, Proclus has here passed from considering the level of opinion to considering the level of *logos* or discursive reason.

28 In this essay, we will discuss only certain features of the epistemology in Proclus' *Commentary on Euclid*. For a more general overview see MacIsaac 2010.

29 On the peculiarly Neoplatonic treatment of relation see Gersh 1996, p. 45–56.

represents the lower phase of soul.[30] It is against this background that Proclus elaborates the notion of *logos* that we see in the two treatises named.[31]

Aside from this metaphysical ambivalence, the notion of *logos* is difficult to grasp because of the polysemy of the word itself. Taking our cue from Porphyry who at one point stops to map the range of meanings implicit in the term *logos*,[32] we might perhaps here briefly sketch the semantic unfolding of the term as it emerges from Proclus' usage in the *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*, taking account of the fact that there is no single English translation that captures all the senses of the original Greek term.[33] Thus, *logos* appears (1.) as *form*. At one point, Proclus invites us to think of the universal in the many—the example being the reason-principles of circularity, triangularity, or figure as such—as being twofold: in the objects of sense and in the objects of imagination. Prior to these are the reason-principle in the discursive reasoning and the reason-principle in nature, the former giving substance to imagined circles and the single form in them and the latter giving support to sensory circles and the single form in them.[34] Turning to the various types of relation in which *logos* manifests itself, of particular importance are (2.) *mediation*. Reason-principles can mediate between intellect and soul, for example when Proclus explains that the totality of forms in the soul is derived both from the prior intellect and from the soul itself, and that the soul is therefore not a writing-tablet "empty of *logoi*" (τῶν λόγῶν κενόν) but is itself always written upon by intellect and writing itself;[35] and likewise reason-principles can mediate between understanding and imagination, for example when he argues that the circle in the understanding is simple and unextended whereas that in the imagination is divisible and extended—both being instances of reason-principles[36]–and that thinking in geometry takes place through the "projection" (προβολή) of the various figures and their parts from understanding to the imagination.[37] Also among the vari-

30 On the status of *Logos* in Plotinus see Armstrong 1940, p. 98–108; Rist 1967, p. 84–102; Früchtel 1970; Turlot 1985; Couloubaritsis 1992; and Fattal 1998.

31 Also more extensively in his *Commentary on the Timaeus* which we will not discuss here.

32 For discussion of this passage see Gersh 1992, p. 152–153. For a more general discussion of *logos* in Porphyry see Gersh 2017.

33 Accordingly, during the next few paragraphs we will employ—in addition to simple transliteration and the neutral expression "reason-principle"—the more specialized renderings "ratio," "proposition," "reasoning," etc. as required by the context.

34 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 53. 18–25.

35 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 16. 4–10. Cf. 16. 27–17. 4.

36 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 54. 5–11 + 55. 6–7.

37 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 13. 6–11. On the important role of imagination in Proclus' theory of geometry see Nikulin 2010.

ous types of relation represented by *logos* is (3.) *proportion*. In commenting on Euclid's geometry Proclus also takes the opportunity of summarizing Plato's teaching in the *Timaeus* where the latter authority constructs the soul out of all the mathematical forms, then divides it according to numbers, and finally binds it with "analogies and harmonic proportions" (ἀναλογίαι … ἁρμονικοὶ λόγοι).[38] Of equal importance among the types of relation in which *logos* manifests itself are (4.) that between *the one and the many* and (5.) that between *the whole and the part*: two types of relation that are perhaps better exemplified in some passages of the *Elements of Theology* to be discussed below. Last but not least, *logos* appears (6.) as *thinking*.

It is here that we must complete the semantic unfolding of the term *logos* in the *Commentary on Euclid* by considering various conceptual combinations in Proclus of the types of *logos*–form, mediation, proportion, whole-part, one-many, and thinking—enumerated above. Thus, *logos* appears as a combination of *form* (1) + *mediation* (2) where it corresponds to mathematical form as mediating between intelligible and sensible form. In one passage, Proclus explains that the "mathematical entities" (τὰ μαθηματικά) are the offspring of limit and infinity and hence there are "ratios proceeding to infinity but controlled by the causal principle of limit" (προέρχονται μὲν εἰς ἄπειρον οἱ λόγοι, κρατοῦνται δὲ ὑπὸ τῆς πέρατος αἰτίας).[39] *Logos* also occurs as a combination of *thinking* (6) + the *one and the many* (5) in various cases of cognitive synthesis ranging from simple abstraction—for example, where he considers whether mathematical genera and species are derived from sensible things either according to "abstraction from materiate things" (ἀφαίρεσις τῶν ἐνύλων) or by "collection from particulars to one common definition" (κατὰ ἄθροισιν τῶν μερικῶν εἰς ἕνα τὸν κοινὸν λόγον)[40]—to the complexities of syllogistic deduction—for example, where he explains how our knowledge of the common theorems in geometry is the prior science from which the other sciences "receive their common propositions" (τοὺς κοίνους ὑποδέχονται λόγους).[41] *Logos* appears as a combination of *thinking* (6) + *mediation* (2) in various accounts of psychic faculties where *logos* is situ-

38 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 16. 16–19. Cf. 6. 7–15 (similar interpretation of the *Philebus*).

39 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 6. 7–15. Cf. 20. 27–21. 2.

40 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 12. 2–7 + 15. 16–18. As we have already seen in connection with the *Commentary on the Parmenides*, Proclus considers these processes to represent only half of the process of acquiring knowledge. In order to achieve the latter, it is necessary for the *logos* of "definition" mentioned here to turn into / be combined with the *logos* projected on the basis of intellect. Proclus thus speaks of recollection and awakening of *logoi*. See *In Eucl*. 18. 17–20 and 45. 2–15. Of course, the duality of this process is a quintessential illustration of *logos* as mediation.

41 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 9. 14–19. Cf. 32. 13–20 and 33. 21–24.

ated on the level of the discursive thinking that operates between intellect and sense—for example where Proclus discusses the reasons why the Pythagoreans introduced the term mathematics in order to characterize "the science of discursive reasonings" (ἐπιστήμη τῶν διανοητικῶν λόγων)[42]—or on the level of the imagination operating between discursive resoning and sense—for example in the passage considered above where the reason-principles of the psychological faculties of discursive reasoning, imagination, and sense are arranged in a hierarchy.[43] *Logos* also appears as a combination of *form* (1) + *the one and the many* (5) where it corresponds to the unfolding of the simplicity of intelligible form into discursive multiplicity. At one point, Proclus explains that the discursive reasoning is not motionless like the activity of intellect but "unfolds and traverses the incorporeal world of the reason-principles" (ἀνελίσσεται καὶ διέξεισι τὸν ἀσώματον τῶν λόγων διάκοσμον) now moving from first principles to conclusions and now moving in the reverse direction.[44]

The term *logos* appears only occasionally in the *Elements of Theology*. However, the relative infrequency of the term itself should not lead us to conclude that the notions underlying the term are less important in that text. On the contrary, the entire work consists of propositions and proofs which exemplify the sense of *logos* as a combination of thinking + the one and the many in syllogistic argument as described earlier.[45] Moreover, the senses of *logos* as proportion and as the relations between the whole and the part and between the one and the many are indicated in the accounts of the numerous orders and series of hypostases contained in the work's propositions and proofs.[46] The most important points regarding these latter senses of *logos* may perhaps be stated briefly as follows:

1. *Logoi govern simple relations between parts and wholes*. Proclus argues that in each order or causal chain there exists a single monad prior to the manifold which determines for the members of the order their "unique

42 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 45. 4–5. Cf. 53. 26–54. 1.

43 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 53. 18–25.

44 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 18. 17–19. 5. Cf. 4. 11–14, 11. 19–22, 16. 8–13, etc.

45 For *logos* as argument see Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, props. 59, proof 58. 2; 62, proof 58. 32; 145, proof. 128. 16; for *logos* as demonstration: prop. 111, proof 98. 31–32. Proclus also restates his general view that *logos is an aspect of cognition. As such it is a real thing and relates to real things* in prop. 123, proof 108. 29–31. All "knowledge through a reason-principle" (διὰ λόγου γνῶσις), inasmuch as it grasps intelligible notions and subsists in acts of intellections, is knowledge "of real existents" (τῶν ὄντων). Its power of apprehending truth is "among real things" (ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν).

46 For the general structuring function of *logos* see Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 18, proof 20. 14–16.

proportional relation to one another and to the whole" (ἕνα λόγον πρός τε ἀλλήλα καὶ πρὸς τὸ ὅλον).[47]

2. *Logoi are multiple relations. They govern sets of relations between one part and another*. One proposition states that every particular soul with respect to the divine soul under which it is ranked "has the same proportional relation" (τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν λόγον) as does its vehicle to the vehicle of the divine soul.[48]
3. *Logoi are multiple relations. They govern sets of relations not only between one part and another but between parts and the whole* [*monad*]. Within the proof of another proposition, stating that the first members of a monadic series are conjoined by community of nature with the members of the supra-jacent series, whereas the last members of the series have no contact with it, Proclus observes: "Such terms are not identical in their proportional relation but in the relation whereby they are derived from and referred back to a single term" (οὐδὲ γὰρ εἷς ὁ λόγος, ἀλλ'ὡς ἀφ'ἑνὸς καὶ πρὸς ἕν).[49]
4. *Logoi are more universal and less universal + determine the status "according to participation."* Another proposition states that all those characters "having the proportional relation of a substratum in participants" (ἐν τοῖς μετέχουσιν ὑποκείμενον ἔχοντα λόγον) proceed from more perfect and more universal causes.[50]
5. *Logoi are more universal and less universal + they determine the status "according to causality."* Within another proof, we read that fathers differ as "more universal or less universal" (ὁλικώτεροι … μερικώτεροι)—as do the divine orders themselves—according to the "proportional relation of their causality" (κατὰ τὸν τῆς αἰτίας λόγον).[51]
6. *A Logos determines the status of a monadic term as "monadic"*. Within the proof of a proposition stating that there are series of terms beginning with a monad and proceeding to a coordinate multiplicity, Proclus introduces the words: "For the monad, having the proportional relation of an originative principle …" (ὁ μὲν γὰρ μονάς, ἄρχῆς ἔχουσα λόγον …)[52]

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47 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 21, proof 24. 15–18.

48 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 205, proof 180. 4–6. Cf. Prop. 164, proof 142. 19–22; 185, proof 162. 6–9; 203, proof 178. 5–7. In these cases, *logos = analogy*.

49 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 110, proof 98. 12–14.

50 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 72, proof 68. 17–18. Further examples of the application of the term *logos* in the next four cases can be found at prop. 195, proof 170. 10–13 and prop. 194, proof 168. 31–170. 3.

51 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 151, proof. 132. 34–134. 1.

52 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 21, proof 24. 4.

7. *A logos determines the status of an unparticipated term as "unparticipated."* Within the proof of a proposition stating that the first term in each series must be unique, Proclus includes the words: "For the unparticipated, having the relative status of a monad (…)" (τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀμέθεκτον, μονάδος ἔχον λόγον (…)).[53]

Now the apparent concentration on a relatively limited selection of the senses of *logos* in the *Elements of Theology* does not indicate that Proclus does not also assume there the full range of meanings set out in the *Commentary on Euclid*, any seeming difference of approach resulting from the fact that the latter work theorizes regarding the methodology of geometry whereas the former exemplifies the application of this geometry to theology.

3 Eustratios' Theory of Universals Revisited

The passage quoted earlier from the *Commentary on the Parmenides* showed the role of *logoi* specifically in Proclus' theory of universals and we have now seen applications of the notion of *logoi* in a wide range of contexts by the same author. Given that our initial review of Eustratios' arguments in the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* had indicated that his approach paralleled that of Proclus, is it possible now to find traces of the same *logos* theory in the Byzantine commentator's discussion of wholes and universals? If the answer to this question is affirmative, then it will be reasonable to conclude more decisively that Eustratios' approach to these doctrines is in agreement with that of Proclus, and at the same time to resolve some of the interpretative problems that originally arose in connection with that theory.

In fact, both passages drawn from Eustratios' commentaries refer to the notion of *logoi*, and it is worth revisiting them briefly in order to bring these references into greater relief. In the passage from the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Eustratios notes concerning the whole *of the parts* that the notion of wholeness here refers to "compound things" (σύνθετα) and things divided into many parts. When these compound things are homoeomerous, he adds, the whole is related to the parts in such a way that each part has "the reason-principle and name" (τό τε ὄνομα καὶ ὁ λόγος) of the whole, as stone is divided into stones. The commentator also notes concerning the whole *in the parts*—which replaces, as we have seen, the Platonic embodied form—

53 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 23, proof 26. 25.

that these wholenesses are called "later-born" because the soul contemplates "particulars" (καθ'ἕκαστα) identical or similar in form which have been previously established in bodies and "substantializes in itself the reason-principle" (λόγον … ἐν ἑαυτῇ ὑποστήσασα) seen in them as a common element through abstraction from matter. In the passage from the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, Eustratios makes three references to reason-principles in connection with the wholes or universals. First, he connects the whole *in the part* to the whole *before the parts*. Each of the monads from which the multiplicity arises is a whole in the part, for an individual man is a part of what is "man *simpliciter*" (ὁ ἁπλῶς ἄνθρωπος)—i.e. the whole before the parts—, since he embraces in himself the whole "reason-principle" (λόγος) of what is simply man in an incomplete way. He is a whole in the part because he has in a part of the whole "the whole according to the reason-principle" (τὸ ὅλον κατὰ τὸν λόγον) as a whole. Second, Eustratios shows that the status of the whole *of parts* is determined according to a reason-principle. If a species is lacking, the genus as a whole is maimed, and if an individual is lacking, the species as a whole is maimed. This occurs not "according to their appropriate reason-principles" (κατὰ τοὺς οἰκείους λόγους) but in that "such universals as conceptual" (τὰ οὕτω καθόλου ὡς ἐννοηματικά) have their being or activity in embracing the things below and being predicated of them. Third, Eustratios connects the whole *in the part* to the *whole of parts*. Genus and species—i.e. the wholes of parts—are said to be wholes in the part for they "are seen" (θεωρούμενα) as wholes in the things below them "according to their appropriate reason-principles" (κατὰ τοὺς οἰκείους λόγους). It is not as foot or hand that the genus is thus in the species or the species in the individuals but as "imparting their own wholeness" (ὅλων ἑαυτῶν μεταδιδόντα) to things below them and being seen as a whole in them.

There is one reference to *logos* in the materials quoted from the Byzantine commentator that tells a slightly different story. In the passage from the *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* Eustratios observes in connection with the transcendent forms that the Platonists here speak of certain "reason-principles, enhypostatic, divine, intellectual" (λόγοι … ἐνυπόστατοι θεῖοι νοεροί) "in relation" (πρός) to which all things "instantiated in matter" (ἔνυλα) exist and become. They call these reason-principles "forms, Ideas, wholes, and universal" (εἴδη, ἰδέαι, ὅλα, καθόλου). To some extent, this usage can be explained in terms of the Neoplatonic precedent whereby the notion of *logos* which is associated primarily with the levels of soul and nature can sometimes be applied to the level of intellect.[54] However, Eustratios' application of the term *logos* here to

54 See Früchtel 1970, p. 24–40.

the transcendent forms situated within the divine Craftsman's intellect may rather indicate a shift from the Proclean intellectual milieu to that of a more overtly Christian Platonism. Of course, both these explanations may be valid.

Now if it is granted that an understanding of the function of *logoi* is necessary in order fully to grasp the theory of wholes and universals in Proclus and Eustratios, many obscurities still remain surrounding the notion of *logos* itself. As we have already argued, much of the difficulty in interpreting this notion results from the metaphysical ambiguities inherent in its relational nature and from the polysemy of the technical term *logos* itself. It is therefore perhaps not unconnected with this situation that Proclus himself can argue in the *Commentary on Euclid's Elements* that the discursive part of the soul "has its substance in the reason-principles of mathematics" (ἐν τοῖς λόγοις οὐσίωται τῶν μαθημάτων) and pre-contains knowledge of those reason-principles "in a substantial and *concealed* manner" (οὐσιωδῶς καὶ κρυφιῶς) even when it is not active in relation to them.[55] But what precisely is the nature of this concealment? In two passages of the *Commentary on the First Alcibiades*, Proclus contrasts the state in which the soul has its *logoi* concealed with the state in which they are brought forth in cognitive activity. In the former case, the soul with respect to the reason-principles "exhales knowledge of them, so to speak" (οἷον ἀποπνεῖν τὰς τούτων γνώσεις) and again[56] "has the reason-principles as though palpitating" (οἱ λόγοι τῶν πραγμάτων οἷον σφύζοντες) within it.[57] The nature of the concealment of the *logoi* is here indicated by means of metaphors. Since the latter are based on the notions of breathing or pulsation, this concealment of the *logoi* seems primarily to have the features of dynamism and unconsciousness.

Given that the cognitive activity of soul as opposed to that of intellect is understood as taking place primarily in time, the question next arises whether the state in which the soul has its *logoi* concealed and unconscious and that in which they are brought forth in conscious cognitive activities are related as one temporal state to another or as an atemporal state to a temporal one. On the basis of Proclus' fundamental tenets stated in the *Elements of Theology* that every participated soul has an eternal "substance" (οὐσία) but an activity in time,[58] that the soul has its *logoi* in a "substantial" (οὐσιώδεις) mode,[59] and that

55 Proclus, *In Euclidem*, 45. 18–46. 3.

56 Proclus, *In Alcibiadem*, 192. 1–5.

57 Proclus, *In Alcibiadem*, 189. 4–10. The importance of these metaphors was first noted by Steel 1997.

58 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 191, proof 166. 26–27.

59 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 194, proof 168. 33.

any effect which proceeds must also remain,[60] it is necessary for the second answer to be the correct one. However, this in its turn implies that the conscious cognitive activities of the soul that do take place in time are *inseparable from* and *simultaneous with* the unconscious cognitive activities of the soul's internal *logoi*.

We can take the first steps in pursuing the implications of this last point for an understanding of the role performed by the *logoi* in the structuring and processing of the world of forms if we return briefly to the semantic unfolding of the term *logos* sketched earlier. It is therefore now possible to argue that the reason why *logos* is treated often as though it were simply equivalent to form and often treated as though it were simply equivalent to thinking is not because it is metaphysically identifiable with either of these in the strict sense—this would be impossible both because Proclus explicitly distinguishes *logos* from form in certain contexts[61] and because the notion of an unconscious thinking is obviously self-contradictory. Rather, the *logos* functions as a kind of *concealed complement* to the structuring and processing of the world of forms by thinking and therefore does not need to be named and indeed cannot be named independently. In different contexts, *logos* can represent the mediating relation between forms thought as *x, y, z,* etc., or the proportional relation between given forms as thought determinately; it can also represent the relation between the one and the many with respect to forms thought as *x, y, z, etc.*, or the relation between whole and the part with respect to given forms. Most importantly for the theory of universals, it represents the relations signified by the prepositions "before" (πρό), "of" (ἐξ), "upon" (ἐπί), and "in" (ἐν) rather than the meanings of the substantives to which the prepositions are attached.

If this interpretation is correct, then some light has indeed been shed on the obscurities surrounding Proclus' and Eustratios' accounts of wholes and universals. Our close analysis of the most relevant texts selected from the two authors has perhaps been sufficient to show that some of the problems can be resolved. However, the most important lesson to be taken away is undoubtedly that the non-resolution of certain other problems has at least the justification of methodological consistency.[62]

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60 Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, prop. 35 and proof 38. 9–13.

61 For instance, there are *logoi* but not forms of artificial objects. See Proclus, *In Parmenidem*, III. 827. 19–828. 14.

62 The author would like to thank members of the audience at the colloquium on the *Elements of Theology* for making insightful comments at the oral presentation of the first draft of this paper in November 2015. A particular debt is owed to Michael Chase for alerting the writer to some of the irregularities in published English translations of the Neoplatonic Aristotelian commentaries.

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CHAPTER 4

'A Mixing Cup of Piety and Learnedness': Michael Psellos and Nicholas of Methone as Readers of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*

Joshua M. Robinson
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> This man [Origen] delved into our sacred courts from the perspective of Platonic and Aristotelian idle talk and thus dragged in from there all sorts of superfluous and pretentious discourse; and by wishing to seem to comprehend what is against and what is consistent with Christian teachings, and for this to be considered clever by the many, he corrupted and confused the holy Scripture in its entirety. I say this without accusing the man in every respect; for occasionally he gently severs the letter and reveals the spirit; however, in most cases he is overtaken by whatever wind is carrying him and is thus led astray from the main road and falls into the ditches. Don't converse often with the man, but rather, if you wish to know divine things clearly, then enter deeply into the words of Gregory the Theologian. For he alone in my opinion introduced all wisdom into his discourses and prepared a mixing cup of piety and learnedness, so that everyone can drink without satiety, while his cup is never exhausted.[1]
>
> MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Theologica* II, 4

1 *Theologica* II, 4.87–102: ὁ γὰρ ἀνὴρ οὗτος ἀπὸ τῶν Πλατωνικῶν καὶ Ἀριστοτελικῶν ἀδολεσχιῶν ἐς τὰς ἱερὰς ἡμῶν παρακύψας αὐλὰς πᾶσαν ἡμῖν ἐκεῖθεν περιττολογίαν καὶ δεινότητα ἐπεσύρατο, καὶ τῷ δόξαι βουληθῆναι συνιδεῖν τὸ μαχόμενον καὶ τὸ ἀκόλουθον καὶ δεινὸς ἐντεῦθεν τοῖς πολλοῖς νομισθῆναι πᾶσαν τὴν ἱερὰν γραφὴν ἐκαπήλευσε καὶ συνέχεε. λέγω δὲ οὐ πάντα τοῦ ἀνδρὸς κατηγορῶν· ἔστι γὰρ ὅπῃ διασχίζει τὸ γράμμα ἠρέμα καὶ ἀνακαλύπτει τὸ πνεῦμα· ἀλλὰ τὰ πλείω τοῦ ἄγοντος γινόμενος πνεύματος ἐς κρημνοὺς ἐκπίπτει τῆς λεωφόρου ἀποτρεπόμενος. μὴ σύ γε τούτῳ τῷ ἀνδρὶ θαμὰ προσομίλει, ἀλλ' εἴ γε βούλοιο σαφῶς εἰδέναι τὰ θεῖα, τοῖς τοῦ θεολόγου Γρηγορίου λόγοις ἐμβάθυνε. μόνος γὰρ οὗτος κατ' ἐμὴν δόξαν πᾶσαν σοφίαν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ συνεισήνεγκε λόγοις καὶ κρατῆρα πᾶσιν ἐστήσατο θεοσεβείας καὶ λογιότητος, ὥστε πάντας μὲν ἀκορέστως πίνειν, ἐκεῖνον δὲ λήγειν μηδέποτε. I am grateful to Stratis Papaioannou for help in translating this passage.

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1 Introduction[2]

In a well-known article by Gerhard Podskalsky,[3] Nicholas of Methone's *Refutation* of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* served as indirect evidence that the interest in Proclus so abundantly evident in the works of Michael Psellos in the eleventh century had in fact persisted into the time of Nicholas, who died around 1166.[4] Surely, the argument goes, such a refutation demonstrates a contemporary fashion for Proclus in Byzantium; Nicholas would scarcely have gone to such lengths to refute Proclus had he not regarded his influence as a continuing and contemporary problem. Indeed, in his prologue to the *Refutation*, Nicholas explains that he has chosen to write the work because he observes that the attraction of Proclus for some of his fellow Christians has led them into heresy. For this reason he has decided to show, chapter by chapter, the points at which Proclus' teaching and Christian doctrine are at odds.

However, the absence of *direct* evidence for any substantial interest in Proclus' works in Byzantium in the mid-twelfth century might lead one to reconsider.[5] Could one instead account for Nicholas' *Refutation* as a reaction to Psellos' use of Proclus in the previous century? Psellos' writings circulated widely in the twelfth century,[6] and even if they had not, Nicholas would not be the first to engage in polemic with a long-departed threat. Cyril of Alexandria, for example, wrote his lengthy *Contra Julianum* more than half a century after Julian's death.[7]

Among Nicholas' primary aims, some announced explicitly in his prologue and some emerging only later in the *Refutation*, are to defend the doctrine of the Trinity against Proclus' unitary conception of the first principle, and to dis-

2 The research for this article was made possible through a COFUND Junior Research Fellowship at Durham University, where I was generously hosted by Krastu Banev in the Department of Theology and Religion. I would like to thank Andrew Louth, Lewis Ayres and Krastu Banev for helpful feedback in the early stages of this research.

3 Podskalsky 1976.

4 On Nicholas' *Refutation*, see Stiglmayr 1899; Angelou 1984; O'Meara 1989; Alexidse 2002; Trizio 2014; Robinson 2014; Robinson 2017a and 2017b.

5 Ioane Petritsi's Georgian translation of and commentary on Proclus' *Elements* are a notable example of interest in Proclus in this era, which may reflect ongoing trends in the Greek-speaking world. See Alexidse and Bergemann 2009; Gigineishvili 2007; Mtchedlidze 2009 and various other articles by these scholars.

6 See Kaldellis 2007, p. 226–228.

7 See recent critical editions (Riedweg 2016; Kinzig and Brüggemann 2017), as well as text and partial translation in *Sources chrètiennes* (Evieux et al 1985; Odile Boulnois et al 2016). Matthew Crawford and Aaron Johnson are preparing a first English translation of the *Contra Julianum*.

tinguish strictly between the intra-trinitarian generations of the Son and the Spirit from the Father, on the one hand, and the Trinity's creative production of everything else on the other hand. In Nicholas' view, Proclus' hierarchical emanative structure cannot be applied to the persons of the Trinity, where the Son and the Spirit, though causally derivative, are consubstantial with the Father and thus equally divine. Nor is this emanative structure an adequate way to understand God's production of the world, since it seems to present a causal continuum in which the first principle is not the unique metaphysical cause, utterly distinct from its created effects. Instead, this causal continuum involves a series of metaphysical causes that seem to operate in the same manner as the first cause, even if each successive cause is more restricted in scope. Proclus' system is in Nicholas' view irredeemably polytheistic, both with its theory of henads and with its descending sequence of hypostases.

With these issues in mind, I propose in this article to examine Psellos' use of the *Elements*, in order to discover whether he regarded these aspects of Proclus' thought with greater sympathy than Nicholas did, and thus whether Psellos' writings might help to explain why Nicholas wrote his *Refutation*.

2 Michael Psellos and the *Elements of Theology*

It has been recognized for some time that Psellos had an affinity for the Neoplatonists, and that Proclus in particular had a special significance for him.[8] In a famous autobiographical passage of his *Chronographia*, Psellos describes the course of his own education and tells us how, starting from Aristotle and Plato,

> I completed a cycle, so to speak, by coming down to Plotinus, Porphyry and Iamblichus. Then, continuing my voyage, I put in at the mighty harbor of the admirable Proclus, drawing from him all science and conceptual precision.[9]

8 On Psellos' philosophical interests, see Zervos 1920; Joannou 1956; O'Meara 1989, 1998 and 2014; Duffy 2002; Kaldellis 2007; Papaioannou 2013; Jenkins 2006 and 2017; Panagopoulos 2014; Lauritzen 2017; Miles 2017; Walter 2017.

9 *Chronographia*, VI, 38.1–5: ἐντεῦθεν οὖν ὁρμηθεὶς αὖθις ὥσπερ περίοδον ἐκπληρῶν, ἐς Πλωτίνους καὶ Πορφυρίους καὶ Ἰαμβλίχους κατήειν. μεθ' οὓς ὁδῷ προβαίνων εἰς τὸν θαυμασιώτατον Πρόκλον ὡς ἐπὶ λιμένα μέγιστον κατασχών, πᾶσαν ἐκεῖθεν ἐπιστήμην τὲ καὶ νοήσεων ἀκρίβειαν ἔσπασα. O'Meara translates the passage and discusses it in detail (2014, p. 166–168): "From there, as if completing a cycle (*periodon*), I came to a Plotinus, a Porphyry and a Iamblichus, after which I progressed to the most admirable Proclus, as if arriving in a great haven, where I sought all science and accuracy of thoughts. After this, intending to ascend to first philosophy and

Given the climactic position that Proclus occupied in the stages of Psellos' education, it seems reasonable to conclude that he played an important role in Psellos' mature thought. I will not attempt here to determine the exact significance of this passage within the *Chronographia*. Much has been written on the rhetorical dimensions of this work,[10] and it is sometimes suggested that one cannot always take Psellos' writings at face value.[11] For our purposes, however, it suffices to recognize that Psellos here unambiguously affirms his admiration for Proclus, and to take note of the specific benefit he derived from Proclus, namely "all science and conceptual precision (νοήσεων ἀκρίβειαν)."[12]

Even so, one must not exaggerate the role of Proclus in Psellos' texts, where many other authors are also cited, some with great frequency. In the first volume of the *Theologica*, for example, Psellos' citations of Proclus, including many from his commentary on the *Timaeus*, are nearly equalled in number by those of Dionysius, and are exceeded by those of Aristotle, Plato and Maximus the Confessor. Above all, Gregory of Nazianzus dominates the scene, and other authors, including Proclus, are usually introduced in order to elucidate passages from Gregory.[13] Proclus' true significance for Psellos can only be judged by examining the way that he is used in each case.[14]

While Psellos cites multiple works by Proclus (and especially his commentary on the *Timaeus*), here we will consider only his use of the *Elements of*

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to be initiated to pure science, I took up first the knowledge of incorporeals in what is called mathematics, which have an intermediate rank between the nature that concerns bodies and the thought that is free of relation to bodies." Cf. *Theologica* I, 22 (84.38–39), where Proclus is "chief of the most theological among the Greeks": οἱ τοίνυν θεολογικώτατοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ὧν δὴ Πρόκλος κατὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ψῆφον τὸ κεφάλαιον.

10 See Lauritzen 2013.

11 See Kaldellis 1999.

12 See below [currently page 7].

13 In *Theologica* II, citations of Gregory, Maximos and John of Damascus exceed those of Proclus; in *Philosophica minora* I, citations of Aristotle, Olympiodorus and Plotinus exceed those of Proclus; in *Philosophica minora* II, the citations of Proclus (mostly from the commentary on the *Timaeus*) far exceed all other authors.

14 See Miles 2017, p. 81: "The immense complexity of the philosophical, literary, rhetorical and religious traditions that Psellos, like other Byzantine thinkers, inherited, was such that it offered great scope for choosing one's own position, and for combining positions and ideas from previous authors in new ways. Of this kind of intellectual freedom, Psellos made considerable and brilliant use. This is becoming increasingly apparent in the newer scholarship on his work, and it may be said with some confidence that the way forward in Psellan studies lies in detailed and careful readings of his many texts, in particular with an eye to how these combinations, transformations and balancing acts are carried out in the context of specific discussions."

Theology.[15] It seems likely that citations of the *Elements* in Psellos' writings are indicative of Proclus' role in general; in any case, a focus on Psellos' use of the *Elements* keeps our enquiry to a manageable scope and allows us to consider what role if any Psellos may have played in provoking Nicholas' *Refutation*.

There are a few scattered citations of the *Elements of Theology* in various published works of Psellos,[16] but most of his citations of the *Elements* are found in five modern editions, namely the two volumes of the *Philosophica minora*, the *De omnifaria doctrina*, and the two volumes of the *Theologica*. Within these five volumes we can usefully distinguish at least two broadly different ways in which Psellos uses Proclus, namely in compilations or epitomes on the one hand, in which he summarizes or 'plagiarizes' with little or no comment, and in exegetical treatises on the other hand, in which he draws upon Proclus as a tool for understanding some other author's text. In the former genre, the object of attention is Proclus' text, sometimes simply recycled without comment, sometimes introduced or followed by brief comments from Psellos. In the latter genre, the object of attention is some other text (most often Gregory the Theologian), and Psellos introduces Proclus' teaching during the course of his explanation of this other text. The following discussion is structured according to this broad division, which corresponds roughly to the division between the *De omnifaria doctrina* and the two volumes of the *Philosophica* on the one hand, and the two volumes of the *Theologica* on the other.

3 Proclus in Compilation (1): *Philosophica minora* I and II

Within the two volumes of the *Philosophica minora*, the use of the *Elements* is more frequent in the second volume. There, according to the indices, the *Ele-*

15 According to O'Meara (2014, p. 168–169), "The *Elements of Theology* is probably Psellos' favourite Proclean text. He names the text by its title a number of times and uses it extensively in his philosophical, theological and rhetorical works, citing propositions taken from throughout the work. He sometimes uses the same propositions repeatedly and makes considerable use of the book in composing the little encyclopedia, the *De omnifaria doctrina*, which, in various versions, he dedicated to his imperial patrons. This makes it likely that Proclus' *Elements of Theology* was not just a convenient source of philosophical knowledge for Psellos: he could also use it in his teaching, or at least as providing materials for his teaching."

16 Besides the five published volumes discussed here, citations of the *Elements of Theology* can also be found in *Oratoria minora* 27 (9–10), *Orationes Forenses et Acta* 1 (502–503) and *Epistulae* (ed. Papaioannou) 31 (42–43).

ments makes an appearance in nine different treatises.[17] Among these, perhaps the most notable examples are found in *Phil. min*. 10 and 11, where Psellos compiles the propositions that concern intellect and soul respectively, and in *Phil. min*. 35, where Psellos comments on material from six different propositions.[18] Other citations from the *Philosophica minora* will not be considered in depth here.[19]

Phil. min. 10, *On Intellect*, provides us with a good example of pure compilation. Here Psellos simply strings together, without any comment, seventeen propositions from the extensive portion of the *Elements of Theology* that is concerned with intellect. He includes all but two of the propositions in the range beginning with Prop. 166 and ending with Prop. 183, and he introduces this material by saying that he will "sum up in an epitome" the teachings on intellect of "those who philosophize among the Greeks." In the next line, he refers to these teachings simply as "Hellenic opinions," and only at the end of the passage does he tell us that all of the material comes from Proclus. Evidently Proclus is here representative of Greek thought for Psellos.[20]

17 Michael Psellos, *Philosophica minora* II, 9–11, 15, 25, 34–36 and 38. See also *Philosophica minora* I, 36.

18 As well as on four excerpts from Porphyry's *Sententiae*, one of which also corresponds closely to Proclean doctrine.

19 In *Philosophica minora* I, 36, which is an elaborate philosophical interpretation of the meaning of the letters of the alphabet, there is an interesting passage (lines 481–506) that I have not been able to examine thoroughly in context, in which Psellos summarizes various principles from the *Elements of Theology* (cf. *Elements of Theology* 117, 124, 125, 131 and 160) in answer to the question "what are the phenomena of the divine?" and concludes the passage thus: "and the other things, so many as are not disregarded by the theologians and especially Dionysius, who philosophized altogether more precisely (ἀκριβέστερον) concerning these things." In II, 9 (19.15–19), Psellos accepts without reservation Proclean principles concerning the substance and activity of intellect, soul and body as they relate to division and motion (cf. *Elements of Theology* 20). In II, 25 (101.6–13) Psellos endorses the Proclean principle of a mediating principle in the structure of participation (*Elements of Theology* 64 and 129). In II, 34 (117.16–19), Psellos affirms the Proclean principle of degrees of participation (cf. *Elements of Theology* 110). In II, 36 (121.18–19), Psellos mentions, in the course of a lecture on Greek teachings concerning divine creation, the principle that divine creation is through intellectual activity (*Elements of Theology* 174). In II, 38 (142.21–26), Psellos distinguishes various modes of being and affirms the ultimate derivation of all from one (*Elements of Theology* 39). O'Meara also cites *Elements of Theology* 209 as a parallel for the ideas discussed in II, 15 (76.8–9), but the connection is not precise.

20 The same might be said for Nicholas. In the prologue to the *Refutation* (3.15–17), he presents Proclus as the preeminent Greek thinker: "And not least in comparison to all, yea perhaps even more than all, was this mighty Proclus, who was zealous not to be sur-

Similarly, in *Phil min*. II, 11, a short treatise titled *On Soul*, Psellos simply compiles twenty-four propositions from the last section of the *Elements*. In this case, however, he also includes brief comments on the acceptability of Proclus' teaching from a Christian point of view. "Behold I provide you the hellenic teachings concerning soul," he begins, "some of which agree with our scriptures," and then cautioning: "but the bitter among them is more than the sweet."[21] The first proposition to which he refers is Prop. 184, "They say that every soul is either divine, or changes from intellect to non-intellect, or is between these, always intellecting, but inferior to divine souls," and then he comments: "And while this teaching is most absurd, what comes after is more mythological and sillier."[22] "What comes after" in Psellos' compilation comprises all but one of the series of propositions ranging from Prop. 185 to Prop. 195. After quoting this series of propositions, he comments, "Perhaps then these teachings are not altogether absurd, but it would be better to say that they are ambiguous; the things that they say after these, however, are most laughable." The rest of the text, i.e. the material that he says is "most laughable," is mostly exact quotation from all but two of the remaining propositions in the *Elements*. Since a major topic of this section is Proclus' teaching on the "vehicle of the soul" or astral body, which might have struck Christian readers as particularly fantastical, this may account in part for Psellos' judgement here.[23]

Psellos' compilation of this material clearly does not constitute an endorsement of Proclus' views on soul, nor can we conclude from his silence in the previous text (on intellect) that he agreed with everything in it. Yet it is clear that Psellos found this material interesting and useful—useful to himself perhaps, as a kind of condensation of what he had read and as an aid to memory, but probably also useful for his students.

In *Phil. min*. II, 35 Psellos takes a very different approach. In this text, rather than simply compiling numerous propositions (without their proofs) into a condensed presentation of Proclus' teaching on a given topic, Psellos instead quotes individual propositions with their proofs, commenting briefly on each.

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passed in pagan wisdom by even the most preeminent." Besides being a particular threat, Proclus stands for Hellenic wisdom as such.

21 *Philosophica minora* II, 11 (22.1–3).

22 Following St. Paul, γραώδεις is frequently applied to myths (cf. 1 Timothy 4:7: βεβήλους καὶ γραώδεις μύθους παραιτοῦ: refuse profane and old wives' fables); cf. also Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or*. 28.8: ὃ καὶ τῶν Ἐπικουρείων ἀτόμων ἀτοπώτερόν τε καὶ γραωδέστερον: "[the idea that God could be mixed with bodies] is a more absurd old wives tale than even the atoms of Epicurus."

23 Cf. *Philosophica minora* II, 15, where Psellos associates Origenism with such ideas.

The text is titled "On Theology and on the Distinctions among Greek Doctrines" (Περὶ θεολογίας καὶ διακρίσεως δογμάτων Ἑλληνικῶν). It is actually somewhat like Nicholas' *Refutation* in its form and aims, though much more modest in its scope; in it Psellos considers individually only six propositions from the *Elements* (35, 39, 81, 90, 103 and 109), stating in each case whether he considers the proposition in question to be acceptable from the standpoint of Christian doctrine.

The first text quoted is Prop. 35: "every effect remains in its cause and proceeds from it and returns to it." Psellos prefaces the text with the following comment:

> What is agreed upon by us concerning our theological teaching, i.e. the trinitarian consubstantiality, does not need other proofs or the establishment of proofs foreign to the discourse. But among the wise Greeks, reason (λόγος) is a highly productive component of their theological proofs, and it also contributes no small part to our own discourse [i.e., Christian theology] as regards the union and distinction of the Son in relation to the Father, where their union does not eliminate the distinction, nor does their distinction break apart the union.[24]

Psellos here recognizes that trinitarian doctrine is not established by philosophy, but belongs to a "discourse" rooted in revelation and tradition. He nevertheless asserts the common utility or productivity of reason for both 'Greek' and Christian theology. While Nicholas of Methone also recognizes the value of reason (implicitly if not explicitly), he regards Proclus' entire project as a presumptuous rationalism aiming to scale the heavens (like the Tower of Babel) by the power of human thought.[25] Reason, for Nicholas, cannot grasp God in his transcendence. By contrast, even though Psellos sometimes rejects Proclus' particular conclusions, he here shows a fundamental sympathy with Proclus regarding the role of reason in theological inquiry.[26]

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24 *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (117.24–118.4): Τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς θεολογικοῦ δόγματος, φημὶ τῆς τριαδικῆς ὁμοουσιότητος, ὁμολογούμενον παρ' ἡμῶν τὸ [πᾶν] καὶ οὐ δεῖται πίστεων ἑτέρων οὐδὲ τῆς τῶν ἀλλοτρίων τοῦ λόγου συστάσεως. πλὴν ἔστι τε λόγος καὶ παρὰ τοῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων σοφοῖς μέγα τι μέρος λυσιτελῶν αὐτοῖς εἰς θεολογίας ἀπόδειξιν, οὐ βραχεῖάν τινα καὶ τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγῳ συνεισφέρων μερίδα τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ἑνώσεώς τε καὶ διακρίσεως, οὔτε τῆς ἑνώσεως ἀφανιζούσης τὴν διάκρισιν οὔτε τῆς διακρίσεως διιστώσης τὴν ἕνωσιν. I am grateful to Anthony Kaldellis for his help in understanding this passage.

25 See Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of the Elements of Theology*, Prologue, 3.1–4.2.

26 See Panagopoulos 2014 on Psellos' 'rationalism'.

Psellos continues by quoting the entire proof of Prop. 35, and he comments:

> This chapter alone of the Greek theology seems to me to have some contribution to our dogma; for in a manner involving neither time nor body, the only-begotten Word proceeds from the Father and remains in the Father and returns to the Begetter; although he has proceeded, he is not distinguished according to the principle of divinity, nor in returning was he separate, nor in remaining has he been confused with respect to the personal (ὑποστατικὴν) perfection.[27]

As Dominic O'Meara has noted,[28] Psellos' application of Prop. 35 to the Trinity implies a greater degree of compatibility with Christian doctrine than Nicholas of Methone will allow. In his own commentary on the same proposition, Nicholas insists that one must strictly distinguish between the "productive procession" by which all things go forth from God creatively, and the "natural" or "supernatural procession," which he even calls an "unproceeding procession" (ἀπροΐτου προόδου).[29]

> The consubstantially super-substantial persons, even if they proceed from the cause insofar as they are other persons than it, nevertheless do so without proceeding, since they do not differ at all from it in substance, nor indeed are they separated from it. For this reason, they do not desire, for how can they desire him with whom they are identical in substance? Nor do they revert, for how can they revert to him from whom they did not depart?[30]

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27 *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (118.17–23): τοῦτο δέ μοι καὶ μόνον τὸ κεφάλαιον τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς θεολογίας φαίνεταί τινα καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἡμέτερον δόγμα ἔχειν συντέλειαν· ὁ γὰρ μονογενὴς λόγος καὶ πρόεισιν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀχρόνως καὶ ἀσωμάτως καὶ μένει ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς τὸν γεννήτορα, καὶ οὔτε προϊὼν διακέκριται κατὰ τὸν τῆς θεότητος λόγον οὔτε ἐπιστρέφων διέστη οὔτε μένων συγκέχυται κατὰ τὴν ὑποστατικὴν τελειότητα.

28 O'Meara 1989, p. 475. On Psellos' trinitarian thought, see also Gemeinhardt 2001. Papaioannou (2013, p. 174) says of Psellos: "He was […] clearly self-involved in the use of philosophical Hellenism and was indeed innovative in his approach; no one prior to him read Gregory of Nazianzus' Trinitarianism through Proklos' Neoplatonic metaphysics." He adds a note: "An aspect of Psellian writing that, in my opinion, still awaits its devoted student."

29 *Refutation of the Elements of Theology* 35, 44.29.

30 *Refutation of the Elements of Theology* 35, 44.24–28: τὰ γὰρ ὁμοουσίως ὑπερούσια εἰ καὶ πρόεισιν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰτίου, καθὸ καὶ ἕτερά εἰσι παρ' ἐκεῖνο πρόσωπα, ἀλλ' ἀπροΐτως, μηδὲν ἐκείνου κατ' οὐσίαν διαφέροντα μήτε μὴν ὅλως ἐξιστάμενα· διὸ οὐδ' ἐφίεται· πῶς γάρ του, ᾧπέρ εἰσι ταὐτὰ κατ' οὐσίαν; οὐδ' ἐπιστρέφει· πῶς γὰρ οὗ οὐκ ἀπέστη;

Psellos next considers Prop. 39: "And since mention was made of reversion formerly," he says, "one must treat of this in the following way." He then quotes the proposition: "all being reverts either substantially alone or also vitally or also gnostically," and after quoting additional text from the proof of this proposition, he makes this comment: "And this chapter was earlier interpreted in a more extended way by Dionysius the Areopagite, and later was made precise (ἠκρίβωται) by syllogistic method by the Lycian-born Proclus."[31]

Note that the verb here for "make precise" (ἀκριβόω) is cognate with the word Psellos employs in the passage of the *Chronographia* cited earlier, where he stated that from Proclus he "drew all science and conceptual precision" (νοήσεων ἀκρίβειαν). As the passage from *Phil. min.* II, 35 shows, this "conceptual precision" is closely linked with the "syllogistic method" of the *Elements of Theology*. In comparing Proclus with Dionysius here, Psellos seems to imply that Proclus' writings offer an improvement on, or complement to, those of Dionysius.[32]

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31 Psellos, *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (118.30–119.3): τοῦτο δὲ τὸ κεφάλαιον πρότερον μὲν τῷ Ἀρεοπαγίτῃ Διονυσίῳ πλατύτερον διερμήνευται, ὕστερον δὲ καὶ τῷ Λυκογενεῖ Πρόκλῳ συλλογιστικῇ μεθόδῳ ἠκρίβωται.

32 I have found one passage in Psellos, however, in which he appears to rank Dionysius above Proclus. See *De omnifaria doctrina* 101, "Concerning the return of beings to the divine": "Among the things produced by God from not being into being, some are only beings, such as the soulless bodies, some are both being and living things, such as the ensouled bodies, and some are both being and living and intellecting things, such as souls and intellects. Each therefore returns to God from whom it was produced according to its own [mode of] existence. So being makes its return substantially, and what lives makes both a substantial and vital return, and what intellects makes a substantial and vital and gnostic return. For each is reverted in the way that it came forth. And the philosopher Proclus posits and elucidates this philosophical principle in his chapters, and, before him, Dionysius the Areopagite examines (διακριβοῖ) it more clearly than him; and this principle (ὁ λόγος) is among those entirely approved (σπουδαζομένων), being most true and most precise (ἀκριβέστατος)." (Περὶ τῆς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον τῶν ὄντων ἐπιστροφῆς. Τῶν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι παραχθέντων τὰ μέν ἐστι μόνως ὄντα, ὡς τὰ ἄψυχα σώματα, τὰ δὲ καὶ ὄντα καὶ ζῶντα, ὡς τὰ ἔμψυχα σώματα, τὰ δὲ καὶ ὄντα καὶ ζῶντα καὶ νοοῦντα, ὡς αἱ ψυχαὶ καὶ οἱ νόες. ἕκαστον οὖν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, ἀφ' οὗ παρήχθη, κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ὕπαρξιν ἐπιστρέφει. τὸ μὲν οὖν ὂν οὐσιώδη ποιεῖται τὴν ἐπιστροφήν, τὸ δὲ ζῶν καὶ οὐσιώδη καὶ ζωτικήν, τὸ δὲ καὶ νοοῦν καὶ οὐσιώδη καὶ ζωτικὴν καὶ γνωστικήν. ἕκαστον γὰρ ὡς προῆλθεν, οὕτως καὶ ἐπέστραπται. τοῦτο δὲ τὸ φιλοσόφημα καὶ ὁ φιλόσοφος Πρόκλος ἐν τοῖς κεφαλαίοις αὐτοῦ τίθησι καὶ διευκρινεῖ, καὶ πρὸ τούτου ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης Διονύσιος σαφέστερον τούτου διακριβοῖ· καὶ ἔστιν ὁ λόγος τῶν πάνυ σπουδαζομένων, ἀληθέστατος τὲ καὶ ἀκριβέστατος ὤν.) Note the use of διακριβοῖ and ἀκριβέστατος, cognate with ἀκρίβεια. Cf. also *Theologica* I, 59.113–117: "And so that we may pass by the discourses of the Greeks (for the church does not in fact need these for the establishment of its own teachings), we will receive the proofs from the theological teachings by Dionysius." On

How different this is from Nicholas of Methone's reflections on the relationship between Dionysius and Proclus! In commenting on Prop. 122, which concerns the compatibility of divine providence and divine transcendence, Nicholas states that, apart from a few details, including a suggestion of polytheism, "this chapter is otherwise pious." He continues:

> For this reason, it seems to me that [Proclus] has stolen his lofty and in this way remarkable propositions (τὰ ὑψηλὰ καὶ οὕτως ἐξαίρετα θεωρήματα) from the theology of the great Dionysius, having come across this theology in Athens, and having mixed in the evil tares (i.e., the teachings of godless polytheism) with the seeds of piety. And so, it should be better rendered in this way [...][33]

Nicholas proceeds to paraphrase the entire proposition so as to bring it into conformity with Christian belief.[34]

Both Psellos and Nicholas assume, of course, that Dionysius preceded Proclus by several centuries, and both seem also to assume, because of certain similarities between their works, that Proclus was acquainted with Dionysius' writings.[35] While Psellos gives this connection an entirely positive interpret-

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Dionysius' "precision" see also *Philosophica minora* I, 36, 508 (note 19 above). Further study of the relative value of Dionysius and Proclus for Psellos could prove illuminating.

33 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of the Elements of Theology* 122, 117.23–29: Χωρὶς τοῦ πᾶν καὶ τῆς ἄλλης ἐμφάσεως τῆς πολυθεΐας, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τοῦ τὴν ἀγαθότητα καὶ τὸ ἓν ὡς οὐσίαν ἀφορίζεσθαι τῆς θεότητος, τἆλλα εὐσεβὲς τουτὶ τὸ κεφάλαιον. ὅθεν μοι δοκεῖ ἀπὸ τῆς θεολογίας τοῦ μεγάλου Διονυσίου τὰ ὑψηλὰ καὶ οὕτως ἐξαίρετα κεκλοφέναι θεωρήματα, ἐν Ἀθήναις ἐντυχὼν ταύτῃ καὶ τοῖς τῆς εὐσεβείας σπέρμασι τὰ πονηρὰ παραμίξας ζιζάνια, τὰ τῆς ἀθέου πολυθεΐας δόγματα. οὕτως ἂν οὖν ἔχοι κάλλιον ἐκδίδοσθαι·

34 For an insightful discussion of this passage, see Alexidse 2002, p. 122–126.

35 The idea that pagan philosophers were dependent on Dionysius was not new. Psellos and Nicholas were almost certainly familiar with this anonymous scholion, interpolated into John of Scythopolis' prologue to his own scholia on Dionysius' works (PG 4, 21D): "One must know that some of the non-Christian philosophers (τῶν ἐξω φιλοσοφῶν), especially Proclus, have often employed certain concepts of the blessed Dionysius [...] It is possible to conjecture from this that the ancient philosophers of Athens usurped his works and then hid them, so that they themselves might seem to be the progenitors of his divine oracles [...]," quoted in Rorem and Lamoreaux 1998, p. 106. For the possibility of attributing this scholion to John Philoponus, see Rorem and Lamoreaux 1998, p. 107 and Opsomer and Steel 2003, p. 6. The 10th-century *Suda*, in its entry on Dionysius the Areopagite, also shows awareness of similarities between Proclus and Dionysius. "We should know that some of the pagan philosophers, and especially Proclus, often have used the theories of the blessed Dionysius, and they did it also with his bare words. One might suppose from that, that the earlier Athenian philosophers, after having usurped his works—as Dionysius

ation, however, suggesting that Proclus took what he found in Dionysius and usefully re-worked it with greater "conceptual precision," Nicholas can only regard Prop. 122 as an inferior copy, the result of Proclus' theft and subsequent corruption of Dionysius' teaching.[36]

I will now summarize Psellos' comments on the remaining four propositions quoted in this treatise. Regarding Prop. 81, "everything separately participated is present to the participant through some inseparable power that it gives," he states that it is "partly true according to our dogmatic conceptions, and partly false," and he gives a historical and christological interpretation in which John the Baptist is, like Proclus' "inseparable power," "a forerunner of the union of the Word with us, who proceeded as an illumination, preparing the soul for the reception of the first light."[37] Psellos rejects, however, any notions of "an

himself mentions, writing to Timotheus—hid it, in order to be seen as the authors of his divine books." (ἰστέον δέ, ὡς τινες τῶν ἔξω σοφῶν καὶ μάλιστα Πρόκλος θεωρήμασι πολλάκις τοῦ μακαρίου Διονυσίου κέχρηται καὶ αὐταῖς δὲ ξηραῖς ταῖς λέξεσι. καὶ ἔστιν ὑπόνοιαν ἐκ τούτου λαβεῖν ὡς οἱ ἐν Ἀθήναις παλαιότεροι τῶν φιλοσόφων σφετερισάμενοι τὰς αὐτοῦ πραγματείας, ὧν αὐτὸς μνημονεύει πρὸς Τιμόθεον γράφων, ἀπέκρυψαν, ἵνα πατέρες αὐτοὶ ὀφθῶσι τῶν θείων αὐτοῦ λόγων.) Translation taken from the *Suda On Line* (https://www.cs.uky.edu/~raphael/sol/sol-html/).

36 Earlier in the *Refutation* Nicholas had already disparaged Proclus in comparison to Dionysius: "This one, although composing an *Elements of Theology*, does not seem to have dipped even the very tip of his pen into this most god-befitting theory concerning power, which Dionysius, great and illustrious in divine things, investigated more thoroughly [...]" (*Refutation of the Elements of Theology* 78, 81.20–22).

37 See also Psellos' discussion of receptive powers in *Philosophica minora* II, 25, "On Illumination," where he seems to have greater sympathy for the particular features of Proclus' theory: "I perceive that you are always unreceptive of such contemplation, concerning which you have again posed a problem. For although you receive the substances of beings, you do not accept their illuminations and forms. Know, however, that nothing among substances had become akin to another substance, unless some forerunner, proceeding from it as an illumination, became a sort of receptacle for the sending nature. Therefore, the intellect never received God, if it had not participated in divinity, nor did the soul accommodate the substantial intellect, if it had not partaken of the intellectual property, nor did the body, divisible, dissoluble, and filled for the most part with earth, become receptive of the immaterial and incorporeal soul, if it had not received some form of it descending into it, nor did the second and third henads receive the power of the first henad, if they were not deemed worthy of some more divine unification. For it is one thing for the soul to participate in the all-perfect and super-substantial intellect, and another for it to commune in the intellectual property; and, for the same reason, no rational soul is without intellect (for all things after intellect that have come to be from God received from there [intellect] certain intellectual illuminations to themselves), yet in comparison to the all-perfect and super-substantial intellect, many of these subsist deprived of intellect. Therefore, both he who says that every rational soul is intellectual and he who says, oppositely to this, that it is without intellect, speak truth, the former concerning intellectual illumination, the

intermediary between soul and body," of an "inseparable actuality," of "natural hypostases in bodies," of "conjecturing animals," of "appetitive animals," or of "an individualizing hypostasis of irrational soul." "Because of these things," he concludes, "I receive this Proclean chapter in part, and in part I dismiss it."[38] He has singled out the respect in which he can give the proposition a Christian application, but he rejects various other details as contrary to "our discourse."

On Prop. 90, where Proclus states that "the first limit in itself and the first infinity exist before every subsistent limit and infinity," Psellos comments,

> I have learned from our oracles [i.e. Christian scriptures] about the things that are limited and infinite, and I have known the limits and infinities in these limited and infinite things, but I have not comprehended a limit and an infinity that are separate from the things of which they are predicated, for these do not have a nature to subsist in themselves.[39]

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later concerning the substantial intellection. Do not be in doubt, therefore, concerning the doctrine, which has coherence or cogent power for acceptance." (Ἀπαράδεκτόν σε ἀεὶ τοῦ τοιούτου κατανοῶ θεωρήματος περὶ οὗ καὶ αὖθις ἠπόρησας. τὰς γὰρ οὐσίας τῶν ὄντων δεχόμενος ἐλλάμψεις αὐτῶν καὶ ἰνδάλματα οὐ προσίεσαι. ἀλλ' ἴσθι ὡς οὐδεμία τῶν οὐσιῶν προσφυὴς ἑτέρᾳ ἂν ἐγεγόνει οὐσίᾳ, εἰ μή τις ἀφ' ἑκάστης πρόδρομος προϊοῦσα ἔλλαμψις ὑποδοχή τις ὥσπερ τῇ καταπεμψάσῃ φύσει ἐγίνετο. οὔτε οὖν ὁ νοῦς θεόν ποτε ἐδέξατο, εἰ μὴ μετεσχήκει θεότητος, οὔτε τὸν οὐσιώδη νοῦν ἐχώρησεν ἡ ψυχή, εἰ μὴ μετειλήφει νοερᾶς ἰδιότητος, οὔτε τὸ μεριστὸν σῶμα καὶ σκεδαστὸν καὶ γῆς κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον ἀναπεπλησμένον δεκτικὸν ἂν ἐγεγόνει τῆς ἀύλου καὶ ἀσωμάτου ψυχῆς, εἰ μή τι ἐκείνης ἴνδαλμα εἰς αὐτὸ καταβεβηκὸς ὑπεδέξατο, οὔτε τῆς πρώτης ἑνάδος αἱ δεύτεραι μετ' ἐκείνην καὶ τρίταιτὴν ἄρρητον ἐδέξαντο δύναμιν, εἰ μή τινος ἑνώσεως θειοτέρας κατηξιώθησαν. ἄλλο γοῦν ἐστι τὸ μετασχεῖν τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ παντελείου καὶ ὑπερουσίου νοῦ καὶ ἄλλο τὸ κοινωνῆσαι νοερᾶς ἰδιότητος· καὶ κατὰ μὲν ταύτην οὐδεμία τῶν λογικῶν ψυχῶν ἄνους ἐστί (πᾶσαι γὰρ ἀπὸ θεοῦ μετὰ νοῦ γεννηθεῖσαι ἐλλάμψεις τινὰς ἐκεῖθεν εἰς ἑαυτὰς νοερὰς κατεδέξαντο), κατὰ δὲ τὸν παντέλειον καὶ ὑπερούσιον νοῦν πολλαὶ τούτων καθεστᾶσιν ἔρημοι νοῦ. ὅ τε γοῦν πᾶσαν ψυχὴν λογικὴν ἔννουν εἰπὼν καὶ ὁ ἀντιθέτως τούτῳ ἄνουν ἀντειρηκὼς ἀληθεύετον ἄμφω, ὁ μὲν περὶ τῆς νοερᾶς ἐλλάμψεως, ὁ δὲ περὶ τῆς οὐσιώδους ἀποφηναμένω νοήσεως. μὴ οὖν ἀμφίβαλλε περὶ τοῦ δόγματος, ἀκολουθίαν ἢ ἀναγκαστικὴν δύναμιν εἰς παραδοχὴν ἔχοντος.)

38 Psellos, *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (119.4–13): Τὸ δὲ 'πᾶν τὸ χωριστῶς μετεχόμενον διά τινος ἀχωρίστου δυνάμεως, ἣν ἐνδίδωσι, τῷ μετέχοντι πάρεστι', τῷ αὐτῷ φιλοσόφῳ ἀπεφασμένον, ἔστι μὲν οὗ ἀληθές ἐστι κατὰ τὰς ἡμέτερας δογματικὰς ὑπολήψεις, ἔστι δὲ οὗ ψεύδεται· ὅτι μὲν γὰρ τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς τοῦ λόγου ἑνώσεως πρόδρ[ομος] προέρχεται ἔλλαμψις ἑτοιμάζουσα τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ πρώτου φωτός, οὐδὲ ὁ καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγος ἀγνοεῖ, ψυχῆς δὲ καὶ σώματος οὐκ οἶδε μεσότητας, οὐκ ἀχωρίστους ἐντελεχείας, οὐ φυσικὰς ἐν τοῖς σώμασιν ὑποστάσεις, οὐ δοξαστικὰς ζωάς, οὐκ ὀρεκτικάς, οὐδὲ ἀλόγου ψυχῆς ὑπόστασιν ἰδιάζουσαν. διὰ ταῦτα ἐκ μέρους μὲν δέχομαι τὸ Πρόκλειον τουτὶ κεφάλαιον, ἐκ μέρους δὲ ἀποπέμπομαι.

39 Psellos, *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (119.16–20): πεπερασμένας μὲν γὰρ οὔσας καὶ ἀπείρους καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἡμετέρων λογίων μεμάθηκα καὶ τὰ πέρατα καὶ τὰς ἀπειρίας ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς πεπερασμένοις καὶ ἀπείροις ἔγνωκα, πέρας δὲ καὶ ἀπειρίαν χωριστὰ ὧν ταῦτα λέγεται οὔπω συνείληφα, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ φύσιν ἔχει ὑποστῆναι ταῦτα καθ' ἑαυτά.

Psellos' reaction here is similar to what one might call Nicholas' "Aristotelian" critique of Proclus' tendency (as Nicholas sees it) to give reality to abstractions:

> The divine is *first limit* and *first infinity*, the former since the one both unifies and holds together and limits all things, the latter since it is beyond all and neither bounded nor circumscribed, either by a certain being or by all at the same time; besides the divine there is no other limit or infinity that subsists itself in itself, but only these mere relations of reason and non-existent imaginations that have a by-being (παρυφιστάμενα) in beings, and that tend more to non-being than to being. For the limit of something is neither that whole thing nor a part of it, but what remains beyond the whole, such as the point of the line and the line of the surface and the surface of the body. And how does non-being give subsistence to being? And infinity is the privation of limit, but no privation, *qua* privation, is subsistence-giver of something.[40]

Thus, Limit and Infinity are for Nicholas either divine names or mere abstractions; they are emphatically *not* independent productive principles.

Regarding Prop. 103, "all things are in all, but in a suitable way in each" (e.g. "in being are both life and intellect, and in life are being and knowing, but in one case noetically, in another case vitally, and in another case substantially"), Psellos states that he "accepts it as understood in the concept of the philosopher, because, since it holds neither falsely nor truly with our scriptures, it is cleansed from dirt."[41] In other words, this Proclean principle is compatible with Christian teaching even though it is not stated in scripture. It is an aspect of Proclus' teaching that Psellos can appropriate without reservation, and (as we will see shortly) he employs this very proposition in one of his exegetical works.

Finally, Psellos rejects the last proposition in the treatise, Prop. 109, which concerns the way in which particulars on one level of reality can participate in the universal principle of the immediately superior level either through their own universal principle or through a particular member of the immediately superior level.[42] "In our scriptures," Psellos says, "neither a universal soul nor

40 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of the Elements of Theology* 90, 90.24–91.2.

41 Psellos, *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (119.21–25): Τὸ δὲ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἑκάστῳ ('καὶ' γάρ φησιν 'ἐν τῷ ὄντι καὶ ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ὁ νοῦς, καὶ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ νοεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅπου μὲν νοερῶς, ὅπου δὲ ζωτικῶς, ὅπου δὲ οὐσιωδῶς') ὡς φιλοσόφου ἐννοίας ἐχόμενον ἀποδέχομαι, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ τοῖς ἡμετέροις λογίοις οὔτε ψευδῶς οὔτε ἀληθῶς ἔχον λυμαίνεται.

42 E.g. a particular soul can participate in the universal principle Intellect either through the

a universal nature besides the particulars is taught. So I refuse this chapter as shown to be more Greek than true."[43] Here again we see a convergence between Christian teaching and the Aristotelian critique of the separate existence of forms or universals. While Psellos does not make this convergence explicit, and indeed might himself be disinclined to oppose the Platonist position on this point, Nicholas for his part cites Aristotle more than once for this very purpose.[44]

4 Proclus in Compilation (2): *De Omnifaria Doctrina*

Before we consider Psellos' use of Proclus in the *Theologica*, I need to say something about his didactic compilation known as the *De omnifaria doctrina* (Διδασκαλία παντοδαπή).[45] This work, which survives in several redactions, was initially composed for Constantine IX Monomachos, but a later version was dedicated to Psellos' pupil Michael VII Dukas. In Westerink's edition the text comprises two hundred and one brief chapters on a variety of topics: theology, psychology, ethics, physics, physiology, astronomy, meteorology and cosmography. Like some of the short treatises in the *Philosophica minora* II considered above, the *De omnifaria doctrina* is in large part a compilation of material from other authors, especially Plutarch, Olympiodorus, and Proclus. In all, eighteen chapters of the *De omnifaria doctrina* use material from about forty different propositions of the *Elements of Theology*.

In the case of the isolated short treatises discussed earlier, we saw that Psellos' compilation of Proclean doctrine did not necessarily indicate his full endorsement: such treatises could be understood in terms of pedagogical utility, without necessarily displaying Psellos' own philosophical commitments. For several reasons, however, it seems more difficult to argue for a non-committed use of Proclus in the case of Psellos' *De omnifaria doctrina*. First of all, the very fact of inclusion within a larger set of chapters confers greater significance on any chapter that contains Proclean material: this inclusion suggests both that this Proclean material is safe and that it merits a certain pedagogical prominence. Second, in certain chapters it is clear that Psellos definitely endorses

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universal principle Soul (which itself directly participates Intellect) or through the particular intellect with which it corresponds (and which also directly participates Intellect).

43 *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (119.30–33): παρὰ γὰρ τοῖς ἡμετέροις λογίοις οὔτε ὅλη ψυχὴ οὔτε τις ὅλη φύσις παρὰ τὰς μερικὰς δεδογμάτισται. παραιτοῦμαι γοῦν τουτὶ τὸ κεφάλαιον ὡς Ἑλληνικώτερον ἢ ἀληθέστερον ἐκφανθέν.

44 See *Refutation of the Elements of Theology* 60 and 184.

45 Ed. Westerink 1948.

the Proclean material that is quoted or paraphrased, or even that this material serves as a hermeneutical framework for discussing Christian themes. The resulting impression is that Psellos' system, while simpler than that of Proclus, is more elaborate than the general Christian teaching of his day.

5 "To Interpret the Wise Things Wisely": Proclus as an Exegetical Resource

We turn now to Psellos' use of Proclus in the *Theologica*. Whereas Psellos' approach to Proclus' *Elements* in the passages from the *Philosophica minora* that we have considered may be described as quotation or compilation, sometimes with brief commentary, where Proclus' philosophy itself is the object of attention, by contrast, in the works collected as *Theologica* Proclus is not the focus, but is introduced into Psellos' exegesis of something else, whether scripture, liturgical poetry or Gregory of Nazianzus's orations. I turn now to several of these exegetical texts.

The two volumes of the *Theologica* contain a total of one hundred and fifty-nine treatises, in seventeen of which, according to the indices, the *Elements of Theology* is quoted or paraphrased. Many of Psellos' citations of Proclus are quite brief and incidental, having an illustrative or corroborative function, but introduced only in passing and not dwelt upon or developed.[46] Among those

46 Here I will summarize those not discussed in the body of this article. In *Theologica* I, 22 Psellos refers (lines 38–49) to Proclus' hierarchy of things eternal in both substance and activity, things temporal in both substance and activity, and the mediating level of things eternal in substance but temporal in activity (cf. *Elements of Theology* 29 and 55). In *Theologica* I, 53 (147–148) he refers to the intermediate position of soul in this hierarchy (cf. *Elements of Theology* 191), and in II, 4 (42–43) and II, 5 (79) Psellos invokes the Proclean principle that the soul is a mean or mediator between divisible and indivisible substance (cf. *Elements of Theology* 190). In I, 54 (132–136) Psellos cites Proclus by name in regard to the simultaneity of remaining, procession and return, in I, 57 (95–96) he refers to the presence of causes in effects, and in I, 75 (86–88) he refers to the simultaneity of cause and effect (cf. *Elements of Theology* 35). In I, 59 (112–113) he refers to the Proclean principle of mediation (cf. *Elements of Theology* 132). In I, 64 (78–89) he invokes the Proclean principle of degrees of receptivity and participation (cf. *Elements of Theology* 122). In II, 3 (146–147) and II, 29 (7) Psellos refers to God as transcending and giving being, life and intellect (cf. *Elements of Theology* 115). In II, 18 (34), citing Proclus and the *Elements* explicitly, Psellos states that the Good and the One are identical (cf. *Elements of Theology* 13). Finally, in II, 33 (9–17) Psellos cites Proclus' distinction between perpetuity and eternity as correlated to the categories of being and life respectively (cf. *Elements of Theology* 105).

citations that are not simply incidental, several different modes or functions are apparent, and I will now present four examples to illustrate these modes or functions. Some of these examples also contain Psellos' explicit indications of Proclus' function and what value he sets on his thought.

In *Theologica* I, 7, an exegesis of the verse in Proverbs 9:1, "wisdom built for herself a house and supported it with seven pillars," Psellos brings in material from Propositions 103 and 195 as a way of explaining how it is that this verse in Proverbs, a book that Psellos regards as predominantly ethical, can nevertheless have cosmological and theological meanings as well. Thus, according to Psellos, the house that wisdom built may be understood (1) "ethically," as the soul in the scientific state, which is supported by the pillars of the sciences and arts, or (2) "naturally," as the cosmos built by the divine Logos, with the pillars symbolizing the quasi-perpetual stability of the cosmos, or (3) "theologically," as the human nature assumed by the divine Word and supported by the pillars of the virtues. The point of mentioning Proclus in this context is to offer a metaphysical principle with hermeneutical consequences, a principle that explains how a predominantly ethical text can have cosmological and theological significance as well. One the one hand, Psellos says, Solomon is a

> theologian in the Song, a physiologue in Ecclesiastes and simply a chastening teacher in the Proverbs. […] But on the other hand […] he mixes in theological teachings with physiology, and he mixes in natural contemplations with theology, since he adds to the Proverbs sometimes naturally, sometimes theologically, because "all things are in all things" according to Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, but on one level paradigmatically, on another iconically, and on another according to existence.[47]

The phrase "all things are in all things" is drawn from Proposition 103, while the qualifications "paradigmatically," "iconically" and "existentially" are drawn from Prop. 195. The point here seems to be that a text that may be ethical "according to existence" (καθ' ὕπαρξιν) while nevertheless "iconically" containing cosmological and theological truths as well.

47 Psellos, *Theologica* I, 7.38–47: ἐν μὲν τῷ Ἄισματι θεολόγος ἐστίν, ἐν δὲ τῷ Ἐκκλησιαστῇ φυσιολόγος καὶ ἐν ταῖς Παροιμίαις παιδαγωγὸς ἀτεχνῶς ἐστι σωφρονιστής, τὸν δὲ 'ἐν ἡμῖν παῖδα', ἤτοι τὴν ἄλογον καὶ νηπιώδη ψυχήν, τῇ τοῦ νοῦ ἡγεμονίᾳ ὑποτιθεὶς καὶ σωφρονίζων τούτου τὸ ἄτακτον. ἔστι δὲ ὅπῃ τῇ μὲν φυσιολογίᾳ θεολογικὰ ἐγκαταμίγνυσι δόγματα, τῇ δὲ θεολογίᾳ φυσικὰ θεωρήματα, ὡς δὲ καὶ ταῖς Παροιμίαις νῦν μὲν φυσικῶς, νῦν δὲ πρόσεισι θεολογικῶς, ὅτι καὶ 'πάντα ἐν πᾶσι' κατὰ τὴν θεολογικὴν τοῦ Πρόκλου Στοιχείωσιν, ἀλλ' ὅπου μὲν παραδειγματικῶς, ὅπου δὲ εἰκονικῶς, ὅπου δὲ καθ' ὕπαρξιν.

Psellos' use of Proclus here contributes relatively little to the treatise, most of which is taken up with distinguishing the predominant qualities of the four books of Solomon and then with elaborating the sense of the verse in question on the three levels already mentioned. The principle from Proclus, "all things are in all things," serves as the hinge of the discourse at the transition to this latter task. Of course, it is a commonplace of the patristic tradition that a text may have multiple levels of meaning, and so one might reasonably wonder whether Psellos really needed Proclus at all here, given that in the Byzantine tradition the notion of multivalence in the scriptures is entirely standard. But in any case the passage shows the importance that Psellos ascribes to Proclus as an exegete and as a resource for hermeneutical principles.[48]

The next text to consider is *Theol.* I, 11,[49] in which Psellos interprets a verse composed by John of Damascus, from the fifth ode of the canon for the feast of the Transfiguration: "O Christ, who with invisible hands have fashioned man in your image, you displayed your archetypal beauty in the body (or "created form" = πλάσματι), not as in an image, but as you yourself are according to substance, being both God and man."[50] After quoting portions of this text, Psellos states:

> It is fitting to inquire what is the archetypal beauty, and how this is manifested in the created forms (πλάσμασι), sometimes being depicted in images, sometimes being shown according to substance, and how here, although the paradigm has come to be in the image, it is not manifested according to the existence of the image, but is shown according to the property of its own nature.[51]

It seems that Psellos wishes to understand the difference between the manifestation of divine beauty "in images," such as occurred in the Old Testament

48 See Papaioannou 2013, p. 35 and 55.

49 Cf. Lauritzen (2012), who asserts that Gautier has misidentified Psellos' citation of Proclus as *Elements of Theology* 103, whereas, according to Lauritzen, the better parallel would be *Elements of Theology* 71, which contains the terms ὑπέρτερα and ὑφείμενα. In fact, however, these particular terms are less relevant than the principle stated in *Elements of Theology* 103 that "All things are in all things, but in each according to its proper nature." Cf. also Proclus' application of this principle to the soul in *Elements of Theology* 195.

50 From *Ode* 5 of the *Canon for the Transfiguration*; text is in the *Menaion* (6 Aug), discussed in Louth 2002, p. 268–274.

51 Psellos, *Theologica* I, 11.7–11: καὶ ζητεῖται εἰκότως τί τὸ ἀρχέτυπον κάλλος, ὅπως δὲ τοῦτο ἐμφαίνεται ἐν τοῖς πλάσμασι, νῦν μὲν εἰκονιζόμενον, νῦν δὲ κατ' οὐσίαν δεικνύμενον, καὶ πῶς ἐνταῦθα ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι γενόμενον τὸ παράδειγμα οὐ κατὰ τὴν τῆς εἰκόνος ἐμφαίνεται ὕπαρξιν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τῆς οἰκείας φύσεως ἰδιότητα δείκνυται.

theophanies, and the manifestation of God in the Incarnation, the distinctiveness of which was made preeminently apparent in the transfiguration on Mt. Tabor. Before attempting to answer the questions he has posed, Psellos introduces what he calls "two canons of philosophy" as interpretive tools that will aid in answering these questions. This passage thus involves explicit reflection by Psellos on his own hermeneutical method.

> And so that we do not grasp the discourse in a careless way,[52] and so that we interpret the wise things wisely, the discourse must be referred to the canons of philosophy, and from there must be contributed the solution to the problems under investigation; and I do not mean the philosophy that is involved in nature—nature with which place, time, body and motion co-subsist, nor do I mean that philosophy which has as its object the unmoved forms that lie in conceptual thinking, which they call mathematical, but I mean this philosophy of what lies above, which is unhypothetical and foundational,[53] which exists in pure and unmoved and dimensionless forms; to it we who have geometrized must go, according to the divine inscription of Plato.[54] But whereas he [Plato] sends the theologizer to it through the mathematical objects, Proclus, who received Plato's teachings, going beyond the mathematical itself,[55] composed another *Elements* pertaining to theology. So he says somewhere in his chapters [τὰ κεφάλαια, i.e. the *Elements of Theology*] that the higher things are in the lower things and the lower things are in the higher things;[56] but again, in the writings where he Chaldaizes, he speaks in another way, saying concerning the same things that on the one hand, the heavenly things are in the earth in an earthly way (on the one hand, the higher things are in the lower things as paradigms, and on the other hand, the lower things are in the higher things as images), but on the other hand, the earthly things are in heaven in a heavenly way. So then, following these two canons, we will show that the paradigms that come to be in the images show their own reflections in one way in relation to the nature of those [images], but subsist in another way according to their own substance.[57]

52 I.e., the opposite of ἀκρίβεια.

53 Or "dealing with first principles."

54 The inscription over the Academy: "Let no one ignorant of geometry enter."

55 E.g. Euclid's *Elements*.

56 Cf. *Elements of Theology* 103 and 195.

57 Psellos, *Theologica* I, 11.12–31: Καὶ ἵνα μὴ ἀμελῶς τοῦ λόγου ἀψώμεθα, τὰ σοφὰ δὲ σοφῶς ἑρμηνεύσω μεν, ἐπὶ τοὺς τῆς φιλοσοφίας κανόνας ἀνακτέον τὸν λόγον κἀκεῖθεν τοῖς ζητήμασι τὴν λύσιν

The "two canons" are the two statements from Proclus. They are not to be taken as two different principles, apparently, but as two statements (the second more elaborated) of the same principle concerning how a higher reality can be in a lower reality, and vice versa.

But the wording of the second "canon" requires several comments. First, I have provided here a slightly corrected text on the basis of the manuscript, changing Gautier's τὰ [δὲ] ὑψηλότερα to τὰ μὲν ὑψηλότερα: "on the one hand, the higher things."[58] With the μὲν in place, it becomes easier to see that the order of the sentence is quite awkward. The first and last elements of the sentence ("the heavenly things are in the earth in an earthly way" and "the earthly things are in heaven in a heavenly way") are together a close paraphrase of a line in Proclus' *De sacrificio et magica*:

> [...] θαυμάσαντες τῷ βλέπειν ἔν τε τοῖς πρώτοις τὰ ἔσχατα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτοις τὰ πρώτιστα, ἐν οὐρανῷ μὲν τὰ χθόνια κατ' αἰτίαν καὶ οὐρανίως, ἔν τε γῇ τὰ οὐράνια γηΐνως.
>
> [...] being astonished by seeing the last things in the first things and the first things in the last things, the earthly things in heaven in a causal mode and a heavenly fashion, the heavenly things in the earth in an earthly fashion.[59]

ἐρανιστέον· φιλοσοφίας δέ φημι οὐ ταύτης δὴ τῆς περὶ τὴν φύσιν εἱλουμένης, ᾗ δὴ τόπος καὶ χρόνος καὶ σῶμα καὶ κίνησις παρυφίσταται, οὔτε αὖ ἐκείνης, ἥτις ἀκίνητα μὲν ἔχει τὰ εἴδη, ἐν ἐπινοίᾳ δὲ κείμενα, ἣν δὴ μαθηματικὴν ὀνομάζουσιν, ἀλλὰ τῆς ὑπερκειμένης ταύτην, τῆς ἀρχοειδοῦς καὶ ἀνυποθέτου, τῆς ἐν καθαροῖς εἴδεσι καὶ ἀκινήτοις καὶ ἀδιαστάτοις· πρὸς ἣν δεῖ γεωμετρήσαντας ἡμᾶς ἰέναι κατὰ τὸ θεῖον γράμμα τοῦ Πλάτωνος. ἀλλ' οὗτος μὲν διὰ τῶν μαθημάτων ἐπὶ ταύτην παραπέμπει τὸν θεολογήσοντα, ὁ δέ γε τὰ ἐκείνου διαδεξάμενος Πρόκλος καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν μαθηματικὴν ὑπερβάς, ἑτέραν Στοιχείωσιν πρὸς θεολογίαν συντίθησι. λέγει γοῦν που τῶν κεφαλαίων αὐτοῦ ὡς καὶ τὰ ὑπέρτερα ἔνεισι τοῖς ὑφειμένοις καὶ τὰ ὑφειμένα τοῖς ὑπερτέροις· ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἐν οἷς Χαλδαΐζει ἄλλον τρόπον φησί, περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν λέγων, ὡς τὰ μὲν οὐράνια ἐν γῇ χθονίως εἰσί (τὰ μὲν ὑψηλότερα παραδειγματικῶς ἐν τοῖς καταδεεστέροις, τὰ δὲ ταπεινότερα εἰκονικῶς ἐν τοῖς ὑπ[ερτέροις), τὰ δὲ] χθόνια ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐρανίως. τούτοις γοῦν τοῖς δυσὶ κανόσιν ἑπόμενοι δείξομεν ὅπως τὰ παραδείγματα ἐν ταῖς εἰκόσι γινόμενα πῇ μὲν πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνων φύσιν τὰς ἐμφάσεις ἑαυτῶν δεικνύουσι, πῇ δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν οὐσίαν ὑφίστανται. I have added parentheses and made minor changes to Gautier's text. See further discussion below.

58 At the end of a line, just after χθονίως εἰσί τὰ and just before ὑψηλότερα, there is a hole in the parchment. Gautier has supplied the word δὲ here in brackets. It seems, however, that the scribe wrote the text when the hole was already there (so that no text is missing), and in addition, one can also discern a μὲν just after the hole. Hence, τὰ μὲν ὑψηλότερα etc. I am grateful to Stratis Papaioannou for examining the manuscript with me and making this clear.

59 Ed. Bidez 1928, 148.8–9. Bidez gives further references to Proclus in his apparatus. I am

In Psellos' citation, however, the material from *De sacrificio* is awkwardly interrupted by the two middle elements: "on the one hand the higher things are in the lower things as paradigms, and on the other hand, the lower things are in the higher things as images." I have added parentheses in the passage to mark this as an interruption.

Furthermore, for those familiar with Proclus' thought it is clear that the middle two elements present Proclus as speaking in a way that he never speaks elsewhere: in other Proclean texts, "paradigmatically" (παραδειγματικῶς) always describes either how the lower "is in" the higher or how the higher "is" the lower; likewise, "iconically" (εἰκονικῶς) always describes either how the higher "is in" the lower or how the lower "is" the higher.[60] In Psellos' citation, however, this usage has been inverted, and as a result, the passage gives the impression that Proclus is speaking of four distinct modes, i.e. two ways in which the higher can be in the lower, and two ways in which the lower can be in the higher.

How are we to explain this inversion of Proclus' terminology? We must reject the supposition that Psellos intentionally confused the terms or failed to grasp the distinction, for he is a careful student of Proclus. Either he overlooked the mistake, or (perhaps more likely) the text was corrupted at a later date. In any case, if we correct the middle two elements so that they conform to Proclus' usual usage, and then move them to the end on the assumption that they function as a gloss interrupting the outer two elements, then the whole becomes more comprehensible:

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grateful to Dominic O'Meara for the identification of this source, and for additional help in understanding this passage.

60 Cf. *Elements of Theology* 195, 170.4–5: "Every soul is all things, paradigmatically the things of sense, and iconically the intelligible things" (Πᾶσα ψυχὴ πάντα ἐστὶ τὰ πράγματα, παραδειγματικῶς μὲν τὰ αἰσθητά, εἰκονικῶς δὲ τὰ νοητά.). Note that here "paradigmatically" is used to describe the way that the higher "is" (not "is in") the lower, and "iconically" is used for the way the lower "is" (not "is in") the higher. On the other hand, when Proclus elsewhere speaks of one thing being "in" another "paradigmatically," he is speaking of the relation of the lower to the higher, and not, as it seems in *Theologica* I, 11, of the higher to the lower. For example, see *In Tim.* I, 8.19: "and in the mathematicals both exist, the firsts iconically, the thirds paradigmatically" (καὶ ἐν τοῖς μαθηματικοῖς ἀμφότερά ἐστιν, εἰκονικῶς μὲν τὰ πρῶτα, παραδειγματικῶς δὲ τὰ τρίτα), or again, see *In Tim.* I, 13.10: "the sensibles are in the intelligibles paradigmatically and the intelligibles are in the sensibles iconically" (διότι καὶ τὰ αἰσθητὰ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ἐστι παραδειγματικῶς καὶ τὰ νοητὰ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς εἰκονικῶς·). This is the opposite of how he speaks in the passage in *Theologica* I, 11 that we are considering. If one took Psellos' citation here for a model, one would expect Proclus to put it the other way round in his commentary on the *Timaeus*, and to say that "the intelligibles are in the sensibles paradigmatically."

> τὰ μὲν οὐράνια ἐν γῇ χθονίως εἰσί, [τὰ δὲ] χθόνια ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐρανίως. τὰ μὲν ὑψηλότερα εἰκονικῶς ἐν τοῖς καταδεεστέροις, τὰ δὲ ταπεινότερα παραδειγματικῶς ἐν τοῖς ὑπ[ερτέροις].[61]
>
> on the one hand, the heavenly things are in the earth in an earthly way, and on the other hand, the earthly things are in heaven in a heavenly way; [for] on the one hand, the higher things are in the lower things as images, and on the other hand, the lower things are in the higher things as paradigms.

Neither this postponement of the middle elements nor the transposition of εἰκονικῶς and παραδειγματικῶς have any support in the manuscript; nevertheless this arrangement does seem to make the most sense of the text, and the transposition at least is necessary if this citation is to be consistent with Proclus' known writings.

Fortunately for our purposes, Psellos' exegesis does not seem to depend upon the inversion of the two adverbs, nor, consequently, does my explanation of his exegesis depend on my proposed emendation, so long as it is clear that the second "canon," while more elaborate, still only involves two modes, namely that by which the higher is in the lower, and that by which the lower is in the higher. While Psellos' initial statement of the questions to be addressed might lead one to expect that he will enlist Proclus to explain the difference between manifestation "in an image" and manifestation "according to substance," it turns out that Psellos seems to employ the Proclean canons only in order to introduce the general principles of how archetypes or paradigms (higher realities) are manifested in images (lower realities) according to the mode or level of the images. Psellos uses Proclus' canons (or canon) in order to mark the distance between the paradigm and the image, so that, having done so, he may put into stark relief the distinctiveness of the Incarnation as that event in which the paradigm fully descends into the image.

Psellos wishes to show the difference between, on the one hand, the great variety of ways in which God manifested himself prior to the Incarnation, and on the other hand, the unique way in which he showed himself in the Incarnation, and specifically in the Transfiguration. He explains the former category

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61 I would like to thank Dominic O'Meara, Carlos Steel and Stratis Papaioannou for their help with this passage. O'Meara identified the parallel in *De sacrificio*, Steel confirmed my conviction that παραδειγματικῶς and εἰκονικῶς are transposed and also noted the awkward interruption of the two middle elements, and Papaioannou assisted me in examining the manuscript and correcting aspects of Gautier's reading.

first of all in terms of the universality of creaturely participation in God. This participation is diverse, according to the receptivity of the creature, and thus God may be manifest in one way to the angels and in another to human beings:

> For the illuminations sent from the One, being images of its substance, appear in one way in the higher orders but in another in the lower [orders]. And so, in all these the divine is beheld, not according to substance, but in certain images and in [...] faint and obscure tracks, since there is no generated nature that is able to contain God's substance.[62]

Thus, if God is seen as shining amber or as a wheel (two of Psellos' examples), this is not because these images are adequate to God's essence, but rather,

> since the nature of the beholders was unable to contain the substance of the divine, it appeared to them in those forms which in fact they were able to see; for the diminishment of the images is not from the side of the nature of the divine, but from the weakness of the beholders [...]. We depict God in images because he is not embodied so that he might be entirely visible to us [literally: "fall under our whole eyes"], but is wholly uncircumscribable and invisible.[63]

The point to grasp is that while these are genuine manifestations of the divine, they nevertheless involve a kind of diminution or transposition in accordance with creaturely capacity. The case is different with the Transfiguration, however, for when the Word of God became incarnate, he

> dwelt substantially with his own image, not shining his theophany on us, but making our nature subsist substantially with his own person. Henceforth therefore the pure beauty is hidden under the assumption, and since it was necessary that sometime this [beauty] be seen by the creature as

62 *Theologica* I, 11.41–47: αἱ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἐλλάμψεις πεμπόμεναι, εἰκόνες τῆς ἐκείνου οὐσίας τυγχάνουσαι, ἄλλως μὲν ταῖς ὑπερτέραις {οὐσίαις} ἐνδάλλονται τάξεσιν, ἄλλως δὲ ταῖς ὑφειμέναις. ἐν πάσαις γοῦν ταύταις οὐ κατ' οὐσίαν ὁρᾶται τὸ θεῖον, ἀλλ' ἐν εἰκόσι τισὶ καὶ ἐν [.....] μασι καὶ λεπτοτάτοις καὶ ἀμυδροῖς ἴχνεσιν, ἐπεὶ μηδ' ἔστι τις γεννητὴ φύσις οὐσίαν χωρῆσαι δυναμένη θεοῦ.

63 *Theologica* I, 11.59–80: ἀλλ' ἐπειδήπερ ἡ τῶν θεωμένων φύσις χωρεῖν τοῦ θείου τὴν οὐσίαν ἀδύνατος ἦν, ἐν ἐκείνοις τοῖς εἴδεσιν αὐτοῖς ἐμφαντάζεται ἃ δὴ καὶ ἰδεῖν δεδύνηνται· οὐ γὰρ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ θείου φύσιν ἡ τῶν εἰκόνων ἐλάττωσις, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν τῶν ὁρώντων ἀσθένειαν. [...] ἐν εἰκόνι τοῦτον καὶ σκιαῖς φανταζόμεθα· τὸν δὲ θεὸν καὶ μᾶλλον εἰκονιζόμεθα, ὅτι μὴ σεσωμάτωται, ἵν' ὅλοις τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν ὑποπέσῃ, ἀλλ' ὅλος ἐστὶν ἀπερίληπτος καὶ ἀόρατος.

> though from some mirror, he prepared Tabor as a limit for himself in relation to this [...]. Moses and Elijah appear to him, who [...] foreshadowed his descent iconically so that, what they saw in shadows, this also they might see shining truly.[64]

The "archetypal beauty," according to Psellos, is "the truly flashing of the pure hypostasis of the Son."[65]

> [...] having the whole divinity that is in the Father and in the Spirit, the Son came down, and *hypostatizing* our whole nature with his filial hypostasis through his body, by his divinity he mixed and joined together divided things, i.e. humanity and divinity, through his one hypostasis. For since the Son is one hypostasis, he had the divinity of Father and Spirit indivisibly in this [hypostasis], and he united man to his own hypostasis—not this or that man, but the whole nature—and in fact altogether united this with the divinity.[66]

It is as though the archetype descended to the level of its image, wholly uniting that image with itself. While one might have expected that Psellos would employ Proclus' 'canons' in order to explicate God's distinctive manifestation in the Incarnation, it seems that in fact the role of Proclus is limited here to elucidating the usual or 'normal' modes of divine manifestation, precisely so that the entirely new character of the Incarnation may be made plain. By elucidating the structure of manifestation "in images," Psellos shows how, in the usual order of things, images always fall far short of their paradigms. The starkness of the polarity (paradigm/image) then serves as the backdrop for something

64 *Theologica* I, 11.84–93: ἐπὶ τὴν ἰδίαν εἰκόνα οὐσιωδῶς κεχώρηκεν, οὐκ ἐλλάμψας ἡμῖν τὴν αὐτοῦ θεοφάνειαν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ προσώπῳ οὐσιωδῶς τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν ὑποστησάμενος. τέως μὲν οὖν ἐκρύπτετο τὸ ἀκήρατον κάλλος ὑπὸ τὸ πρόσλημμα, ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔδει ποτὲ οἷον ἀπό τινος δίσκου ἐναυγάσαι τοῦτο τῷ πλάσματι, ὄρος μὲν αὐτῷ πρὸς τοῦτο ἡτοίμαστο τὸ Θαβώριον, [...] Μωυσῆς αὐτῷ καὶ Ἠλίας ἐμ[φ]αίνονται, οἱ [...] τὴν τούτου κάθοδον εἰκονικῶς προτυπώσαντες, ἵν' ὃν ἐν σκιαῖς [εἶδον], τοῦτον καὶ ἀληθῶς θεάσωνται λάμποντα·

65 *Theologica* I, 11.98–99: ἀρχέτυπον δὲ κάλλος ἡ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ ὑποστάσεως ἀκήρατος τῷ ὄντι μαρμαρυγή.

66 *Theologica* I, 11.118–126: ὅλην γοῦν ἔχων τὴν θεότητα τὴν ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι κατελήλυθεν ὁ υἱός, καὶ τῇ αὐτοῦ ὑποστάσει τῇ υἱικῇ ὅλην τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν διὰ τοῦ κυριακοῦ ὑποστησάμενος σώματος, κατέμιξε τῇ θεότητι καὶ συνῆψε τὰ διεστῶτα, ἀνθρωπότητά φημι καὶ θεότητα, διὰ τῆς μιᾶς αὐτοῦ ὑποστάσεως. ἐπεὶ γὰρ μία τυγχάνων ὑπόστασις ὁ υἱός, ἀμερίστως ἐν ταύτῃ τήν τε πατρικὴν εἶχε θεότητα καὶ τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος, ἤνωσε δὲ καὶ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ὑποστάσει τὸν ἄνθρωπον, οὐ τόνδε ἢ τόνδε, ἀλλὰ τὴν ὅλην φύσιν, πάντως δήπου καὶ τῇ θεότητι τοῦτον συνήνωσε.

like a collapsing of this polarity: the paradigm (Christ the archetypal beauty) is united with its image (humanity) in such a way (namely, according to substance) that, nevertheless, no reduction of the paradigm has occurred. That this is so is the revelation of Tabor, showing forth Christ the eternal Son in all his glory.

In *Theol.* I, 11 Psellos thus seems to rely upon Proclus' precision in order to give an explanation in philosophical terms of a principle that is shared between Christianity and Neoplatonism, namely the image/paradigm relationship or (put in other terms) the fact that God is manifest in creation itself and in 'theophanies,' yet "through a glass darkly." Psellos does not confine himself to this common ground, however, but deals forthrightly with the mystery of the Incarnation, conceiving of it as a "substantial" descent of the archetype into the image, yet without raising the question of whether Proclus himself could have admitted this possibility. *Theol.* I, 11 thus represents a substantial (i.e. not merely incidental or ornamental) use of Proclus in which Psellos neither transgresses the bounds of orthodoxy nor sees a need to point out differences between Proclean and Christian teaching.

My remaining two examples, however, seem to involve genuine doctrinal conflict, partially acknowledged by Psellos in the first case, and unacknowledged in the second.

In *Theol.* I, 105 Psellos explicitly refers to Proclus' teaching on the doctrinal question being considered, but then explicitly rejects that teaching. The context is a discussion by Psellos of the two different senses that the adjective *anarchos*, "unoriginate," may have in Christian theology. Having noted that the Father is "unoriginate" in two senses, both as not begotten (ἀτέκτου) and as not generated (ἀγεννήτου),[67] whereas the Son and Spirit are "unoriginate" only

67 *Theologica* I, 105, 416.75–84: "'Father,' he says, 'the father and unoriginate; for [he is] not from something.' For the sense of *anarchos* is double, applied on the one hand to the *atektos*, and on the other to the *agennetos*. And the *agennetos* is, both according to the outside philosophers and according to us, what does not have an older hypostasis than its own existence; for in this way the philosopher Simplicius, interpreting the *De caelo* of Aristotle, defines the *agennetos*. Nothing therefore among beings is *agennetos*, except the One for them, and God for the Jews, and for us the triadic hypostasis commonly and the Father individually. For the others are generated (γεννᾶται), some from each other, some from the first cause, and so in this way Greeks produce (γεννῶσι) soul from intellect, and intellect from being, and being from the one." ('Πατήρ' φησίν 'ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ἄναρχος· οὐ γὰρ ἔκ τινος'. διττὴ γὰρ ἡ τοῦ ἀνάρχου σημασία, ἡ μὲν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀτέκτου φερομένη, ἡ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀγεννήτου. ἀγέννητον δέ ἐστι καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἔξω φιλοσόφους καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς τὸ μὴ ἔχον πρεσβυτέραν ὑπόστασιν τῆς ἰδίας ὑπάρξεως· οὕτω γὰρ ὁ φιλόσοφος Σιμπλίκιος τὴν Περὶ οὐρανοῦ πραγματείαν ἐξηγούμενος τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους ὡρίσατο τὸ ἀγέννητον. οὐδὲν οὖν τῶν ὄντων ἀγέννητον, εἰ μὴ παρ' ἐκείνοις τὸ ὂν [Gautier: scr. ἓν?] καὶ παρ' Ἰουδαίοις θεὸς καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν κοινῶς μὲν ἡ τριαδικὴ ὑπόστασις,

in the second sense, as not generated, Psellos then cites an axiom from Porphyry's *Sententiae* that he had also considered and rejected in *Phil. min.* II, 35, namely the claim that "everything that generates generates something inferior to its own substance."[68] He suggests that this claim derives from the assumption of a hierarchy in which "the One generates Being, Being generates Intellect, and Intellect generates Soul," and he summarizes part of Proclus' proof of the same claim (though expressed in different terms) in Prop. 7 of the *Elements*, calling him here "the most philosophical Proclus." Proclus had expressed Porphyry's claim as follows: "Every productive cause is superior to the nature of what is produced," and he began his proof with a tri-lemma that Psellos paraphrases: "for either [...] things that generate will generate something similar to themselves or something inferior to themselves or something superior to themselves."[69] Curiously, while Psellos reports Proclus' refutation of the possibility that one thing might generate something *superior* to itself, he conveniently

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ἰδίως δὲ ὁ πατήρ. τῶν γὰρ ἄλλων τὰ μὲν ἐξ ἀλλήλων γεννᾶται, τὰ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου αἰτίου· οὕτω γοῦν Ἕλληνες ψυχὴν μὲν ἀπὸ νοῦ γεννῶσι, νοῦν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄντος, τὸ δὲ ὂν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνός.) It seems that Psellos' philosophical sources have led him to ignore the patristic convention, from around the time of Nicaea, of reserving *agennetos* (with two 'nu's) for the Father, in the sense of unbegotten, while *agenetos* (with one 'nu') could apply to the whole Trinity, as uncreated. The loss of this distinction here is perhaps a sympton of the difficulty in applying the features of an emanative system to the Christian vision of reality, where neither the idea of creation nor the intra-trinitarian relationships correspond exactly to the features of an emanative continuum. Cf. John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, I: "Now, one ought to know that ἀγένητον written with one ν means that which has not been created, or, in other words, that which is unoriginated; while ἀγέννητον written with two ν's means that which has not been begotten. Therefore, the first meaning implies a difference in essence, for it means that one essence is uncreated, or ἀγένητος; with one ν, while some other is created, or originated. On the other hand, the second meaning does not imply any difference in essence, because the first individual substance of every species of living being is unbegotten but not unoriginated. For they were created by the Creator, being brought into existence by His Word. But they were certainly not begotten, because there was no other like substance pre-existing from which they might have been begotten. Thus, the first meaning applies to all three of the super-divine Persons of the sacred Godhead, for they are uncreated and of the same substance. On the other hand, the second meaning definitely does not apply to all three, because the Father alone is unbegotten in so far as He does not have His being from another person. And only the Son is begotten, for He is begotten of the substance of the Father without beginning and independently of time. And only the Holy Ghost proceeds: not begotten, but proceeding from the substance of the Father. Such is the teaching of sacred Scripture, but as to the manner of'the begetting and the procession, this is beyond understanding" (trans. Chase 1958, p. 181–182).

68 *Theologica* I, 105.86: πᾶν τὸ γεννῶν χεῖρον τῇ ἑαυτοῦ οὐσίᾳ γεννᾷ; cf. *Philosophica minora* II, 35 (120.3–4).

69 *Theologica* I, 105.89–90: ἤ, γάρ φησιν, ὅμοια γεννήσει τὰ γεννῶνταἑαυτοῖς ἢ χείρονα ἢ κρείττονα.

omits Proclus' denial that one thing could produce another that is like or equal to itself. Yet this in fact is precisely the position that Psellos, as an orthodox trinitarian, wishes to maintain, and so he asserts, just as Nicholas of Methone will, that Prop. 7 simply is not applicable to the Trinity:

> But in regard to the divine generation this philosophical theory is nonsense; for the Father has not begotten a Son who is inferior to himself, but one who is equal to himself. And if someone wishes to live philosophically by reason, he might say that this theological saying of the Greeks holds in the case of those things that generate and are generated where the one that generates is older by time than the one that is generated; but for us no age, still less time, intervenes between Father and Son, and because of this the Begotten is not inferior to the Father.[70]

Psellos certainly recognizes the problem that this fundamental Proclean principle raises vis-à-vis Christian doctrine, but he seems to avoid dealing with Proclus' argument in detail, dismissing the entire proposition as only pertinent to generation *in time*. This is perhaps disingenuous on his part, for he surely knows that Proclus' proposition intends to describe a non-temporal truth. Indeed, in an important sense, as Nicholas will later point out, it is demonstrably false that in time-bound generation the cause is superior to the effect, for it is characteristic of natural generation that the offspring are fully equal in nature or species to their progenitors: humans beget humans, horses beget horses, and so forth.[71]

I turn now to my final example of Psellos' use of Proclus' *Elements*. Whereas, in the passage just discussed, Psellos takes pains to limit the application of a Proclean principle so that it will not conflict with orthodox doctrine, in *Theol.* I, 62 we find that Psellos not only uses Proclus in a substantive way, but even thoroughly integrates problematic Proclean structures into his own exposition of the topic, doing so with no hint of disagreement.

The treatise concerns a line from Gregory of Nazianzus's *Oration* 14, "On the Love of the Poor," which I provide here in its context:

> What is this wisdom that concerns me? And what is this great mystery? Or is it God's will that we, who are a portion of God that has flowed down from above, not become exalted and lifted up on account of this dignity, and so despise our creator? Or is it not rather that, in our struggle and

70 Psellos, *Theologica* I, 105.95–96; cf. Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of the Elements of Theology*, ch. 7.

71 Cf. Nicholas, *Refutation of the Elements of Theology*, chs. 18, 25 and 151.

> battle with the body, we should always look to him, so that this very weakness that has been yoked to us might be an education concerning our dignity?[72]

Psellos is concerned with the phrase, "we who are a portion of God that has flowed down from above." He divides it into two parts, first considering the words, "portion of God," and later the words, "flowed down from above." Psellos imagines that someone might ask how we are "a portion of God," given the corporeal connotations of this language. He observes that while thinking of corporeal 'parts' of God might be consonant with the perspective of the Stoics,

> both the older Academy and the new [Academy] agree explicitly that the divine, whatever it is, is incorporeal, creator of bodies and souls and intellects. And our philosophy as well, following them in fact, lays it down clearly that nothing among beings is like it. How then does this great one, speaking concerning men, say that these are a portion of the greater?[73]

In effect, though without citing it explicitly, Psellos provides as an answer an extended meditation on Prop. 1 of the *Elements*: "Every manifold participates in some way the One." His eventual answer to the question posed is that we are a "portion" of God because we each after our fashion participate in the One, as do all things. "If someone would approach [the saying] philosophically," he begins, "using the division of Plato, then he would discover how the truth is hidden. That nothing among beings is purely one, then, philosophers and noble men are agreed." Psellos proceeds to argue in very Proclean terms that everything short of the unique and transcendent One is not purely one: not matter, not form, not soul, not intellect, not being, not unification, and not henads. It is a remarkable passage, worth quoting at length:

> [...] for matter is immediately indefinite; for this reason you can keep on cutting it to infinity. And form, plunged into misery with matter and suf-

72 Τίς ἡ περὶ ἐμὲ σοφία καὶ τί τὸ μέγα τοῦτο μυστήριον; ἢ βούλεται μοῖραν ἡμᾶς ὄντας Θεοῦ καὶ ἄνωθεν ῥεύσαντας, ἵνα μὴ διὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐπαιρόμενοι καὶ μετεωριζόμενοι καταφρονῶμεν τοῦ κτίσαντος, ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα πάλῃ καὶ μάχῃ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀεὶ βλέπειν, καὶ τὴν συνεζευγμένην ἀσθένειαν παιδαγωγίαν εἶναι τοῦ ἀξιώματος; Trans. Constas 2014, p. 75.

73 *Theologica* I, 62.19–24: οἱ δ' ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας τῆς τε πρεσβυτέρας καὶ τῆς νέας ἀσώματον διαρρήδην τὸ θεῖον, ὅ τι ποτέ ἐστιν, ὡμολόγησαν, σωμάτων καὶ ψυχῶν καὶ νόων δημιουργόν. τούτοις δὴ καὶ ἡ καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοσοφία συνεπομένη αὐτά τε σαφῶς διατάττεται καὶ ὅτι οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων ἐκείνῳ προσείκασται. πῶς οὖν οὗτος ὁ μέγας περὶ ἀνθρώπων διαλεγόμενος ἀπόμοιραν τούτους εἶπε τοῦ κρείττονος;

fering all things through it, is changed from its name of being one. But in fact even soul, keeping itself beyond matter, has a confused and multi-powered nature, but it is not free from separation; so it does not have the forms of beings in a concentrated form, but unrolls them, going from the premises to the conclusions. And the intellect has a certain reflection of the One, as also ancient philosophy says, not separated, and not seeing another through another intermediate, but it gathers the forms of beings together in itself in a compacted way. Yet it is also many; for the intellect is the beings themselves, which in fact are many, but it intellects itself, and in intellecting itself it intellects beings, and the beings are many; and therefore the intellect is many. But if it is many, then what else would exceed so as not to be many? Yes, he says, but being exceeds intellect; however far intellect extends, so too does being; but the converse is not the case, that however far being extends, so too does intellect. For as many things as are intellects or have an intellect, these are also beings; but as many things as are beings, not all of these also intellect (νοεῖ). But [then] the argument proceeds of itself; for if being has the power over many, then it is not in fact purely one, but even beyond these is unification, and unification is a union either of henads or of composites, so that this too is many. What then would someone say concerning the henads? For is not each of these one? How would a henad not be one? But because of this, O good man, it is not one, because it is a henad; for the One transcends; but that which something transcends is not purely that to which it is subordinated.[74]

74 *Theologica* I, 62.28–49: ἥ τε γὰρ ὕλη εὐθὺς ἄπειρος. διὸ καὶ κατὰ ταύτην ἐστὶν ἡ εἰς τὸ ἄπειρον τομή, τό τε εἶδος τῇ ὕλῃ συνδυαστὸν καὶ παντοπαθὲς διὰ ταύτην γενόμενον τῆς τοῦ ἓν εἶναι προσηγορίας ἀπήλλακται. ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ ψυχή, ὑπὲρ τὴν ὕλην ἑαυτὴν στήσασα, πολυμιγὴς καὶ πολυδύναμος πέφυκεν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ αὐτὴ ἀπήλακται διαστάσεως· ὅθεν οὐδ' ἔχει τὰ εἴδη τῶν ὄντων συνεσπειραμένως, ἀλλ' ἀνελίττει ταῦτα, ἀπὸ τῶν προτάσεων χωροῦσα ἐπὶ τὸ συμπέρασμα. ὁ δὲ νοῦς ἔχει μέν τινα τοῦ ἑνὸς ἔμφασιν, ὡς καὶ ἡ ἀρχαία φιλοσοφία φησίν, οὐ διιστάμενος, οὐδὲ δι' ἄλλου μέσου ὁρῶν ἕτερον, ἀλλὰ συνεπτυγμένως τὰ τῶν ὄντων εἴδη ἐν ἑαυτῷ συλλαβών. πλὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ οὗτος πολλά· αὐτὰ γὰρ τὰ ὄντα ὁ νοῦς, ἃ δὴ πολλά εἰσιν, ἀλλ' οὗτος ἑαυτὸν νοεῖ, ἑαυτὸν δὲ νοῶν τὰ ὄντα νοεῖ, τὰ δὲ ὄντα πολλά· καὶ ὁ νοῦς ἄρα πολλά. εἰ δ' οὗτος πολλά, τί ἂν ἄλλο ὑπερβαίη ὥστε μὴ εἶναι πολλά; ναί, φησίν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὂν τὸν νοῦν ὑπερπέπτωκεν· ἐφ' ἃ μὲν γὰρ ὁ νοῦς, καὶ τὸ ὄν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐφ' ἃ τὸ ὄν, καὶ ὁ νοῦς· ὅσα μὲν γὰρ νόες εἰσὶν ἢ νοῦν ἔχει, καὶ ὄντα εἰσίν· ὅσα δὲ ὄντα τυγχάνει, οὐ δήπου πάντα καὶ νοεῖ. ἀλλ' αὐτόθεν ὁ λόγος ἔρχεται· εἰ γὰρ τὸ ὂν ἐπὶ πολλὰ ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν, οὐ δήπου ἕν ἐστι καθαρῶς, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ τούτων ἕνωσις, ἡ δ' ἕνωσις ἢ ἑνάδων ἢ συνθέτων συναθροισμός, ὥστε καὶ αὕτη πολλά. τί δ' ἂν εἴποι τις περὶ τῶν ἑνάδων; ἆρα γὰρ οὐδὲ τούτων ἑκάστη ἕν; πῶς οὖν ἑνάς; ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο, ὦ λῷστε, οὐχ ἕν, διότι ἑνάς· ὑπερβέβηκε γὰρ τὸ ἕν· ὃ δὲ ὑπερβέβηκέ τι, οὐ καθαρῶς ἐκεῖνό ἐστιν οὗ ὑφεῖται.

Psellos introduces the passage by speaking of "the division of Plato," and perhaps he has Plato's divided line in mind. But in fact Psellos here follows Proclus' *Elements* in several particulars, reflecting much of the content of Propositions 20–22 (especially 20), as regards the increasing causal scope in the ascending series: soul, intellect, being, one. It is a striking passage of philosophical ascent, but also surprising, for whereas Psellos often simplifies the Neoplatonic hierarchy, here it is notable and puzzling that Psellos retains the distinctive term "henads" without any explanation or qualification. Here if anywhere Psellos seems to be stepping outside the bounds of orthodoxy. He concludes the passage thus:

> So, since the divine is something other than beings, it is uniquely one, whereas being and intellect are called one according to secondary and tertiary senses. But on the one hand, being itself truly what it is called, it exists in an unmixed way in relation to the opposed; for it is purely one, and [is] being in the proper sense, and inviolate and blessed intellect.[75]

Psellos then gives the complementary conclusion as well: only the One is truly one, but for this very reason we must also affirm that all things participate in the One:

> but if something among other things is called one, then it is named one and is one by virtue of its participation in that One. And so, the great father here calls "portion" that which those who belong to the outside [i.e. pagan] philosophy called imparting and participation. For it seems to many that man has his subsistence from soul and body alone, and they say that he is "intellectual" because the intellect is the most sovereign part of the soul. But to me and those who rightly philosophized, the intellect both is and is called something other than the soul. And just as the body both lives and is moved by its participation in soul, so also the soul intellects by its participation in intellect; and where there is intellect, there also is being; and where there is being, there also is the One. The result is that although we subsist by participation in the One, nevertheless God is con-

75 *Theologica* I, 62.50–53: Ἐπεὶ οὖν τὸ θεῖον ἄλλο παρὰ τὰ ὄντα, ἕν ἐστι μόνως κατὰ δευτέρους καὶ τρίτους λόγους καὶ ὂν καὶ νοῦς καλούμενος. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο μέν, αὐτὸ δὴ ὅπερ λέγεται, ἀμιγῶς ἔχει πρὸς τὸ ἀντίθετον· εἰλικρινῶς τε γάρ ἐστιν ἓν καὶ κυρίως ὂν καὶ νοῦς ἀκήρατος καὶ μακάριος [...] This is more Dionysian than Proclean, insofar as Dionysius identifies the One, Being and Intellect in a transcendent sense in God, whereas Proclus preserves a hierarchy of the One over Being and Intellect.

> fessed as "One" properly speaking, so that we have acquired images and reflections of God in ourselves, because of which we are in fact "a portion of God." But we were once one, not in nature, but in identity of inclination and motion;[76] for the one in us agrees with our being, and this agrees with the intellect, and this agrees with the soul, and this agrees with the body; or rather, so that I may speak more precisely, the body followed the soul, and this followed the things that went beyond it and the One itself, and by means of soul, intellect and being the body was led up to the One and was itself one by participation.[77]

"We were once one," but Psellos proceeds to recount the fragmenting effects of the Fall.

> This is how it was formerly; but when the soul cast off its iconic beauty, turning its back on the divine command, then the divine series itself was torn asunder, and because the impartations were not distributed according to the analogy of the existence, the parts were torn asunder, the wholeness became a part, and the commonality became a great quantity. Because of this Christ is named "corner stone," and he was unified by means of soul so that he might join together the extremes, i.e. One and body, and so that we might become spirit, intellect and god, with "death being swallowed up in" and giving way to "life."[78]

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76 Cf. Gregory, *Or*. 29.2, when speaking of the Trinity: γνώμης σύμπνοια, καὶ ταὐτότης κινήσεως.

77 *Theologica* I, 62.53–72: τῶν δ' ἄλλων εἴ τι οὕτως λέγεται, κατὰ μετοχὴν ἐκείνου ἔστι τε καὶ ὀνομάζεται. ἣν οὖν οἱ τῆς ἔξω φιλοσοφίας μετάδοσιν καὶ μετοχὴν κατωνόμασαν, μοῖραν ἐνταῦθα ὁ μέγας πατὴρ προσηγόρευσε. τοῖς μὲν γὰρ πολλοῖς ἐκ ψυχῆς μόνης καὶ σώματος ὁ ἄνθρωπος δοκεῖ τὴν σύστασιν ἔχειν· ἔννουν δὲ αὐτόν φασιν εἶναι, ὡς τοῦ νοῦ μέρους τοῦ κυριωτάτου τῆς ψυχῆς τυγχάνοντος. ἐμοὶ δὲ καὶ τοῖς κυρίως φιλοσοφήσασιν ἄλλο τι παρὰ τὴν ψυχὴν ὁ νοῦς ἔστι καὶ λέγεται. καὶ ὥσπερ τὸ σῶμα ψυχῆς μετουσίᾳ ζῇ τε καὶ κινεῖται, οὕτως καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ νοῦ παρουσίᾳ νοεῖ· ὅπου δὲ νοῦς, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ ὄν· ἔνθα δὲ τὸ ὄν, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ ἕν. ὥστ' εἰ καὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἐν μετοχῇ καθέσταμεν, ἀλλ' ἐν κυρίως ὡμολόγηται ὁ θεός, ὥστε καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰκόνας ἐν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ ἐμφάσεις κεκτήμεθα, δι' ἃ δὴ καὶ μοῖρα τυγχάνομεν τοῦ θεοῦ. Ἀλλ' ἦμεν ποτὲ ἓν οὐ τὴν φύσιν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ταὐτότητα τῆς γνώμης καὶ τῶν κινήσεων· ὡμολόγει γὰρ τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν ἓν τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς ὄντι, καὶ τοῦτο τῷ νῷ, καὶ οὗτος τῇ ψυχῇ, καὶ αὕτη τῷ σώματι· μᾶλλον δέ, ἵνα τἀκριβέστερον εἴπω, τὸ μὲν σῶμα τῇ ψυχῇ εἵπετο, ἐκείνη δὲ τοῖς ὑπερβεβηκόσι καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ ἑνί, διὰ δὲ μέσης ψυχῆς καὶ νοῦ καὶ ὄντος καὶ τὸ σῶμα πρὸς τὸ ἓν ἀναγόμενον καὶ αὐτὸ ἓν ἦν κατὰ μετοχήν.

78 *Theologica* I, 62.70–77: ταῦτα μὲν πρότερον· ἀφ' οὗ δὲ τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα κάλλος ἡ ψυχὴ ἀπεβάλετο, κατὰ νώτου ἑαυτῆς τὸ θεῖον ποιησαμένη παράγγελμα, διεσπάσθη ἡ θεία αὕτη σειρά, καὶ τῶν μεταδόσεων μὴ διαδιδομένων κατ' ἀναλογίαν τῆς ὑποστάσεως, διεσπάσθη τὰ μέρη καὶ γέγονεν ἡ μὲν ὁλότης μέρος, ἡ δὲ κοινότης πολυπλήθεια. διὰ τοῦτο Χριστὸς 'ἀκρογωνιαῖος λίθος' ὠνόμασται καὶ ἡνώθη διὰ μέσης ψυχῆς, ἵνα τὰ ἄκρα συνάψῃ ἓν καὶ σῶμα καὶ γενώμεθα πνεῦμα καὶ νοῦς καὶ θεός, 'καταποθέντος ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ θνητοῦ' τε καὶ ῥέοντος.

Psellos next traces, in a way that mirrors his earlier metaphysical statements, a corresponding course of redemptive personal unification:

> And observe how much force his phrase "and have flowed down from above" has; for the One is praised here, the One that the argument has in fact shown to be higher than our intellect and being; so truly we established the flowing down from above. For just as in the case of the Heraclean bonds (which in fact are customarily understood as magical in regard to comprehensive magic) if you destroy the beginning of the bond then the whole will be destroyed, in the same way in fact in the case of our series too, if you tear away the one of the bond, then straightway being, intellect, soul and body—the divine series itself—will also be torn apart and destroyed. It is necessary therefore that we, if we live in body alone, run back up to soul and discover from philosophy the bond by which we will bind and loose matter in relation to soul; and if we are "soulish men," on the one hand existing beyond bodies but on the other hand living a life fitting for a man, so that we are not able "to receive the things of the spirit," then it is necessary to ascend to the intellect; but not even this is being in the proper sense, and so from this it is necessary that we be assimilated to being, and then that we run up to the principle of our bond, the One, because in fact we are "a portion of God" according to this alone. For God is one properly speaking, but he is not intellect in the proper sense, since intellect is constitutive of forms, and a form is itself what is unmixed even with privations. But if God were intellect in the proper sense, then where would privations come from, unless we will understand somehow that they come from the demiurge and being? But because there are many privations, it is necessary that the unifications and the henads exist before the others; for this reason, in fact, the One is before all.[79]

79 *Theologica* I, 62.78–98: Σὺ δέ μοι ὅρα τὸ 'καὶ ἄνωθεν ῥεύσαντας' ὅσην ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν· τὸ γὰρ ἓν ἐνταῦθα αἰνίττεται, ὃ δὴ ὁ λόγος ἀνωτέρω τοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν νοῦ καὶ τοῦ ὄντος ἀπέδειξεν· ἄνωθεν γοῦν ἀληθῆ ὑπέστημεν τὴν ῥοήν. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν Ἡρακλείων δεσμῶν, οὓς δὴ νόμος τοὺς γόητας παραλαμβάνειν ἐπὶ τῶν συλληπτικῶν μαγειῶν, ἢν τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ δεσμοῦ διαλύσῃς, τὸ πᾶν ἔσῃ διαλυσάμενος, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς σειρᾶς, ἢν τὸ ἓν ἀποσπάσῃς τοῦ δεσμοῦ, εὐθὺς καὶ τὸ ὂν καὶ ὁ νοῦς καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα, ἡ θεία αὕτη σειρὰ συνδιασπᾶται καὶ συνδιαλύεται. δεῖ οὖν ἡμᾶς, εἰ μὲν ζῶμεν σώματι μόνῳ, πρὸς ψυχὴν ἐπαναδραμεῖν καὶ τὸν δεσμὸν εὑρεῖν παρὰ φιλοσοφίας ὅτῳ τὴν ὕλην εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν συνδήσομέν τε καὶ ἀναλύσομεν· εἰ δὲ 'ψυχικοί' ἐσμεν 'ἄνθρωποι', σωμάτων μὲν ὑπερκείμενοι, τὴν δὲ ἀνθρώπῳ προσήκουσαν ζῶντες ζωήν, ὥστε 'μὴ' δύνασθαι 'δέξασθαι τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος', ἐπανελθεῖν πρὸς τὸν νοῦν· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ οὗτος τὸ κυρίως ὄν, ἀπὸ γοῦν τούτου καὶ τῷ ὄντι προσεικασθῆναι ἡμᾶς χρεών, εἶτα πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ κεφάλαιον τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς δεσμοῦ τὸ ἓν ἐπαναδραμεῖν, καθ' ὃ δὴ μόνον μοῖρα τυγχάνομεν τοῦ θεοῦ. ὁ γὰρ θεὸς κυρίως

Theol. I, 62 is a good illustration of how thoroughly Psellos has absorbed Proclean structures into his own thought. The significance of 'henads' is not made clear here, but in Proclus' works the henads are, as Nicholas repeatedly points out, a polytheistic feature. The fact that without any explanation Psellos integrates 'henads' into his exposition of the participatory relation of all things to the One suggests either that he has lost sight of the boundaries of orthodoxy, or that he is not in this instance very concerned about these boundaries.

6 Conclusion

As we have seen, Psellos uses Proclus' *Elements* in different genres and in different ways. In some texts he simply quotes or paraphrases him without comment, in others he quotes passages from Proclus and appends brief comments on the compatibility of Proclus' philosophy with Christian teaching, and in others (most notably in his discussions of Gregory of Nazianzus), he uses Proclus as a hermeneutical tool. I suggest that this last way of using Proclus provides the clearest measure of Psellos' commitment to Proclus' philosophy, since his compilation of Proclean texts is not a proof of his own commitment to the ideas. On the other hand, it must be recognized that the large volume of Proclean material in Psellos' compilations, especially in the *De omnifaria doctrina*, and especially in light of his frequent use of Proclus in other non-compilatory texts, shows his deep investment in Proclus' thought. This is not surprising, given the prominence Psellos himself ascribes to Proclus when describing the course of his education. Furthermore, whether or not he endorses a given philosophical source, his high regard for the role of reason in theology makes him far more inclined to expect common ground with philosophical sources in the first place, and therefore to consult and employ them.[80] The depth of Psellos' interest in Proclus, quite apart from particular doctrinal questions, prob-

μὲν ἕν, οὐ κυρίως δὲ νοῦς· ὁ γὰρ νοῦς εἰδῶν ἐστιν ὑποστάτης, εἶδος αὐτὸς τυγχάνων τὸ ἀμιγές, οὐ μὴν δὲ καὶ τῶν στερήσεων. εἰ δὲ νοῦς κυρίως ὁ θεός, αἱ στερήσεις πόθεν; εἰ μή που τὸν δημιουργὸν καὶ ὄντα νοήσομεν. ἀλλ' αἱ στερήσεις πολλαί, δεῖ οὖν πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων τὰς ἑνώσεις εἶναι καὶ τὰς ἑνάδας· διὸ δὴ πρὸ πάντων τὸ ἕν.

80 Regarding the different genres, Graeme Miles remarks (2017, p. 89): "The most immediately striking feature of Psellos' *Theologica*, for a reader acquainted also with his *Philosophica Minora*, is the continuity of the two. These lectures as a whole, whether designated philosophical or theological in recent editions, are parts of a continuous pedagogical and philosophical undertaking."

ably would have troubled Nicholas of Methone, who also probably would have regarded Psellos as treading dangerously close to the 'rationalism' for which Nicholas criticizes Proclus.[81]

Psellos uses Proclus in a variety of ways in the exegetical works we have considered. Some of his citations of the *Elements* are inconsequential, some are doing real hermeneutical work but are entirely uncontroversial because they involve principles shared between Christianity and Neoplatonism, and finally, some seem to me to push the bounds of orthodoxy. *Theol.* I, 62 at least seems to be in this category, though I must add that the text is puzzling in several ways, and that Psellos' use of 'henads' here must be studied in relation to other texts where he uses this word.[82]

Michael Psellos and Nicholas of Methone thus have starkly contrasting attitudes towards the *Elements of Theology*. Psellos approaches it with great respect and sympathy, and on occasion this sympathy may lead him to see a greater common ground between Proclus' thought and Christian doctrine than actually exists, or even to transgress the bounds of orthodoxy. Yet such occasions are not as frequent as Psellos' reputation among scholars might lead one to expect, and in several cases Psellos quite clearly rejects aspects of Proclus' thought. For his part, Nicholas is so thoroughly devoted to the teaching of Dionysius that he shares more common ground with Proclus than he realizes: one finds him, for example, using emanative metaphors to characterize divine creation, even while criticizing aspects of Proclus' emanative system. Psellos in any case is in some passages clearly conscious that philosophy can lead into heresy. As the quotation at the head of this article indicates, learnedness must be mixed with piety, and Gregory of Nazianzus represents for Psellos the perfection of this mixture. It is difficult to think that anyone who admired Gregory as deeply as Psellos did could have been very offensive to Nicholas.

Despite their real differences in both substance and rhetoric regarding Proclus, it seems to me unlikely that Psellos' use of the *Elements* was a sufficient reason for Nicholas to write his *Refutation*. While Psellos does seem to push the bounds of what Nicholas would have found acceptable, he does not do so often

81 Whether Proclus should be considered a 'rationalist' is of course another matter, but if 'rationalism' in theology is understood as a confidence in the power of reason to understand transcendent reality, then it is clear that Nicholas regarded Proclus as a rationalist, and would surely have thought the same of Psellos in some instances.

82 In the texts by Psellos included in the TLG, the word ἑνάς occurs twenty-nine times in the singular and thirteen times in the plural. For plural uses see *Theologica* I, 20 (52), 56 (42), 72 (73), 76 (69) and 93 (45); *Theologica* II, 8 (55); *Philosophica minora* II, 38 (144.23); *Epistulae*, 13a (31) = ed. Maltese 1 (47); *Orationes panegyricae* 17 (328).

enough or to a sufficient extent to match plausibly Nicholas' description in his prologue of those who have been led into heresy by Proclus' teaching, especially since Nicholas presents them as his own contemporaries.[83] Two alternatives remain then, as explanations for Nicholas' critique of Proclus: either it responds to a real enthusiasm for Proclus among his own contemporaries, enthusiasm inspired partly by Psellos himself, presumably, but more offensive because less nuanced and discriminating, or it is directed not so much at actual persons as at 'straw men' representing hypothetical appropriations of Proclus, appropriations anticipated in Psellos' use of Proclus, but now envisioned as more thorough and unambivalent, and thus more hostile to Christian teaching. In either case, I suggest, Nicholas' own twelfth-century context holds (hides?) the explanation for his assault upon Proclus' new tower of Babel.[84]

83 In this article I have limited myself to a consideration of Psellos' use of the *Elements of Theology*. A full assessment of Psellos' relationship to Proclus can of course only be made on the basis of a complete survey of all his citations of Proclus.

84 My reading of Psellos here takes for granted his sincerity, but as Anthony Kaldellis has argued (2012) there are reasons to doubt this in some contexts, if we consider his demonstrable tension with the ecclesial and especially monastic mainstream, and take account of the fact that he needed to *appear* to be orthodox even if and when he was not. This consideration must be taken seriously, but I have not yet read widely or deeply enough in Psellos to be able to factor this ambiguity into my account. If we stipulate that Psellos may indeed have been more heterodox than his writings explicitly show, then the question as regards Nicholas' *Refutation* would be, to what extent might Nicholas have 'seen through' Psellos' facade of orthodoxy? If Nicholas could see a greater threat in Psellos' works than lay on their surface, then Psellos may have played a greater role in provoking Nicholas than I have here argued. Whatever the case with Psellos, however, I am confident that we need not apply the same hermeneutic of suspicion to Nicholas himself, who shows no signs of wavering in his orthodoxy. Whatever Nicholas' reasons for writing a lengthy refutation, he was no doubt sincere in opposing Proclus, and did not engage merely in an elaborate 'display' of orthodoxy. For an account of Psellos that acknowledges the ambiguity of his persona and writings while nevertheless reading him as operating with established traditions of Christian reflection and scholarship, see Louth 2007, p. 334–343. Louth stresses, as I have, Psellos' great admiration for Gregory of Nazianzus. While this admiration was certainly based in large part on Gregory's rhetorical and stylistic abilities, it seems unlikely to me that Gregory's writings would have attracted such extensive engagement by Psellos had not both form and content interested him deeply.

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CHAPTER 5

Nicholas of Methone, Procopius of Gaza and Proclus of Lycia

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The *Refutation of Proclus' Elements of Theology* (Ἀνάπτυξις τῆς Θεολογικῆς Στοιχειώσεως Πρόκλου τοῦ Λυκίου = *Refutatio Procli*) attributed to the twelfth-century Byzantine theologian Nicholas of Methone (died between 1160–1166) is an important witness to the circulation and reception of Proclus' work in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium.* The work analyses the text of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* from the point of view of twelfth-century Byzantine orthodoxy and provides for each topic discussed by Proclus its Christian counterpart.[1] However, the paternity of this work has occasionally stirred some controversy as two fourteenth-century Vatican manuscripts ascribe two of the many sections composing this work to the late antique rhetor and theologian Procopius of Gaza (ca. 465/470–526/530 CE). The dispute appeared to be settled in 1984 with the publication of the *editio princeps* of Nicholas' work.[2] However, recently, Eugenio Amato has defended again the Procopian authorship of the text in an erudite article that brings forth new historical and textual arguments favoring this view.[3] Eventually Amato went further than this in editing the two sections of the *Refutatio Procli* ascribed to Procopius as authentic Procopian fragments.[4] According to Amato, Nicholas of Methone

* Michele Trizio was responsible for drafting chapters 1–7; Anna Gioffreda for chapter 8. The conclusions were jointly written.

1 For a general presentation of the work, see Robinson 2014 and Robinson 2017. We would like to thank Joshua Robinson for reading an earlier draft of this essay.

2 Angelou 1984.

3 Amato 2010a.

4 Procopius of Gaza, *Opuscula rhetorica et oratoria*.

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appropriated an earlier Procopian work for purely rhetorical purposes and without declaring his source.[5]

But is it really so? Did Nicholas—one of the most important twelfth-century theologians—shamelessly appropriate a text that he (and evidently his contemporaries as well) knew as Procopius' without fearing detection? Are the two fragments of the *Refutatio Procli* attributed to Procopius all that is left of a polemical work against Proclus written by the scholar of Gaza? And, if so, why does the attribution to Procopius only appear in the second half of the fourteenth-century? Who is the late Byzantine scholar who ascribed to Procopius sections 139 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli* in the Vatican manuscripts, and why was he interested in this text? Contrary to what has been done so far, this article addresses this dispute from a multidisciplinary approach, using text-criticism, paleography and history of culture and education. In this way we are confident of reaching inasmuch as possible, if not a definitive argument, at least a probable one on this issue.

1 Nicholas Reloaded: The Modern Debate on the *Refutatio Procli*

To start, we would like to briefly summarize the earlier debate on the authorship of the *Refutatio Procli*.[6] It all began in 1825 when the German philologist Johann Theodor Voemel published the first modern edition of the *Refutatio Procli* under Nicholas of Methone's name.[7] In 1893, however, Demetrios Roussos noticed that ch. 146 of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* was identical to a fragment attributed to Procopius in a Vatican manuscript edited by Cardinal Angelo Mai in 1831.[8] At this point, after composing three articles on the *Refutatio Procli* as Nicholas' authentic work,[9] the German philologist Draeseke changed his mind and published in 1895 a sensational article accusing Nicholas of plagiarism. According to Draeseke, the *Refutatio Procli* should be regarded as a Procopian work plagiarized in its entirety by Nicholas.[10] This allegation has been widely accepted by Procopian scholars despite the fact that in 1899 Stiglmayr published a refutation of Draeseke's view that rigorously supported Nicholas' authorship of the *Refutatio Procli*.[11] Thus, while most scholars accept

5 Amato 2014, p. XI–LXXXV.

6 For a precise reconstruction of the debate, see Robinson 2014, p. 44–72. We take the opportunity to thank Joshua Robinson for sharing his work with us.

7 See Voemel 1825. On this publication, see Jeck 2015.

8 Roussos 1893; Mai 1831, p. 247.

9 Draeseke 1888; 1891; 1892.

10 Draeseke 1895; 1897.

11 Stiglmayr 1899.

Nicholas' authorship of the text, several specialists on Procopius doggedly adhere to the Procopian paternity of the *Refutatio Procli*, although none have ever really demonstrated proof.[12] Moreover, the supporters of the Procopian authorship have never confronted Stiglmayr's arguments. In fact, these demonstrate that, if attributed to Procopius, the text of the *Refutatio Procli* would contain a great amount of anachronism and *adynata*, sources such as Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, John of Damascus, Photios etc., whom Procopius could not possibly know. In other words, after Stiglmayr the thesis that Nicholas plagiarized an earlier Procopius work in its entirety could no longer be defended.

In 1931 Giovanni Mercati published his monumental volume on the fourteenth-century Byzantine controversy known as 'the hesychast controversy'.[13] For reasons which will be explained later, he dealt with the fragments in the Vatican manuscripts which ascribe chapters 139 and 146 to Procopius. Mercati accepted Stiglmayr's arguments against the plagiarism thesis, but whereas Stiglmayr thought the attribution to Procopius was a wrong conjecture by the scribe of the Vatican fragments, Mercati believed that, on the contrary, the scribe inherited the attribution to Procopius from his model and that, therefore, he cannot be blamed for unskillfulness. According to Mercati, at a certain point chapter 139 and 146 circulated under the name of Procopius independently from the rest of the *Refutatio Procli* ascribed to Nicholas in the extant tradition of the text.[14]

That is why Amato's recent reassessment of the issue is a welcome contribution to the discussion. For the first time, a Procopian scholar admits the Procopian authorship of the text without implying that the whole *Refutatio Procli* ascribed to Nicholas is a plagiarized work. In fact, Amato defends that the *Refutatio Procli* is an authentic work by Nicholas which nonetheless elaborates on an earlier text by Procopius.[15] On this basis Amato explains the existence of the Vatican fragments attributing chapters 139 and 146 to Procopius alone: these fragments are all that are left of a Procopian *Refutation* of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* later re-elaborated by Nicholas of Methone. Amato also insists on a reference by Choricius of Gaza, one of Procopius' disciples, to his master's

12 See e.g. Aly 1957, p. 271; Chauvot 1986, p. 87–88; Matino 2005. To be fair, the thesis of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* has also been accepted by the authoritative Krumbacher 1897^2 and by Tatakis 1949, p. 38.

13 Mercati 1931, p. 264–266. On the controversy, see Russell 2017.

14 Mercati 1931, p. 264–266.

15 Amato 2010a, p. 11–12.

commitment to refute the heresies as a proof favoring Procopius' authorship of the *Refutatio Procli*,[16] and on two testimonia favoring the existence of a Procopian refutation of Proclus' commentary on the *Chaldean Oracles* (more on this later).[17] In his view, these testimonia make the existence of a Procopian *Refutatio Procli* more than probable. Accordingly, the copyist of the two Vatican manuscripts was the last scholar having access to one or even more redactions of a now-lost *Refutatio Procli* penned by Procopius of Gaza.

Overall, Amato's erudite solution to the controversy appears to be a reasonable one which reconciles the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* and Nicholas of Methone's role in the tradition of the text. However, Amato's view currently struggles to gain adherents outside the circle of Procopian specialists. Proof of this is the fact that the fragments ascribed to Procopius in one of the Vatican manuscripts have been recently treated once again as Pseudo-Procopius by Ioannis Polemis[18] in his edition of a fourteenth-century theological treatise attributed by Mercati[19] to the Byzantine scribe and scholar Isaak Argyros and tentatively attributed to John Kyparissiotes by the same Polemis.[20] However, it is also true that the Vatican fragments ascribed to Procopius have been included in the TLG online, though the text is reproduced according to Mai's edition instead of Amato's version.

We can already point out for the reader's benefit that Isaak Argyros, the fourteenth-century hesychast or Palamite controversy, and the two Vatican manuscripts ascribing chapters 139 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli* to Procopius are key elements of this complex story. We believe that by reviewing the available data and by unearthing new evidence we can still make progress in the reconstruction of this complex matter. We will first discuss Amato's arguments favoring the existence of an earlier Procopian refutation of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, then we will present some new findings on the Vatican manuscripts preserving the fragments of the *Refutatio Procli* under Procopius' name, and finally we will propose our solution to this intricate matter.

16 Choricius, *Opera*, 8.1.21, 117.19–22.

17 Cf. *infra* p. 101–102.

18 See Polemis 2012, p. LXXVII. To be fair, elsewhere in his edition Polemis attributes the fragments to Procopius without further elucidation.

19 Mercati 1931, p. 241.

20 Polemis 2012, p. LIII–LVIII.

2 Towards an Unbiased Approach

In our view the previous debate on the authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* has been often limited by:

1) The reluctance to take into account the twelfth-century Byzantine intellectual history and the circulation of Proclus' work in this period. None of the supporters of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* seem to be aware that Neoplatonism, and in particular Proclus' work, had a tremendous impact on eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantine scholars.[21] This bias is evident, for instance, in Amato's claim that Nicholas' *Refutatio* is a mere rhetorical piece with no relationship with the theological and philological literature of the time.[22]
2) The reluctance in engaging seriously the tremendous amount of philological and historical arguments favoring Nicholas' paternity of the *Refutatio Procli* brought forward by Stiglmayr and Angelou. Even if we accept Amato's more sophisticated thesis that Nicholas appropriates and re-elaborates an earlier Procopian text, the elements in the text pointing to a middle Byzantine dating of the *Refutatio* are so many and so relevant that one may fruitfully wonder what is left of this alleged earlier Procopian work. In this regard even Amato's reintroduction of the plagiarism theory does not seem to dispel the ambiguity.[23] As a matter of fact Amato's thesis leads to the paradoxical view that in composing the *Refutatio* Nicholas generally re-elaborated on an earlier work and introduced new elements of his own everywhere, with the exception of chapters 139 and 146, which are to be regarded as authentically Procopian texts.[24] By contrast, we believe that in order to make their case stronger the supporters of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* must identify stylistic features or doctrines in the text that could only be explained by referring to a fifth-century text. In this regard, even if we accept Amato's more sophisticated view, Stiglmayr's arguments still hang as a sword of Damocles above the supporters of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli*.
3) The insistence by supporters of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* on relying for defending their view on two articles by Westerink and Whittaker, published in 1942 and 1975 respectively, whereas none of these

21 Cf. *infra* p. 108–114.
22 Amato 2014, p. XI–LXXXV.
23 Amato 2014, p. XXX.
24 Amato 2010a, p. 7.

articles has ever touched upon this issue.[25] In the first article, Westerink provided slight evidence favoring the existence of a Procopian refutation of Proclus' commentary on the *Chaldean Oracles*, namely a late scholion to Lucian's *Philopseudes* (119.17) and a text of eleventh-century polyhistor Michael Psellos,[26] more on which later. As to Whittaker, nowhere does he demonstrate the existence of a lost Procopian *Refutation* of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, but simply suggests that Psellos got his information on Procopius' alleged refutation of the *Oracles* not from Procopius himself, but rather from an intermediate commentary on Gregory the Theologian.

4) The reluctance to address the state of the fragments attributed to Procopius in the Vatican manuscripts, the method of the scribe, and finally the circulation of these fragments. By contrast, we believe that a close inspection of the manuscripts preserving the fragments and a review of the scribe's *modus operandi* can be of great help for establishing the origin and circulation of the fragments themselves, including the attribution to Procopius of chapters 139 and 146. As a matter of fact, unknown to Amato, such an attempt has already been pursued by Daniele Bianconi.[27] In this paper we are going to expand on Bianconi's findings.

3 Procopius' *Refutatio Procli*? The External Evidence

We must begin by briefly discussing the arguments supporting the Procopian authorship of the text. Most of them cite external evidence suggesting the plausibility of the attribution to Procopius of an otherwise lost *Refutatio Procli*. To start with, supporters of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli* remind us that Procopius' work has come down to us in fragmentary form. Of the many works authored by Procopius and praised by Photios as "many and diverse" (πολλοί τε καὶ παντοδαποί)[28] only a few survive, and because of this one cannot exclude the possibility that Procopius ever authored a text such as the *Refutatio Procli*. However, we believe that the Patriarch's words cannot be used as a sort of *nihil obstat* argument favoring the existence of a lost Procopian work.[29] If, on the one hand, Photios' praise of the expansive breadth of Procopius' literary output encourages the supporters of the Procopian authorship,

25 Cf. e.g. *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* III, p. 390.
26 Westerink 1942; Whittaker 1975.
27 Bianconi 2008, p. 354.
28 Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 160, 130a6. On Procopius' life and work, see Amato 2010b.
29 Cf. e.g. Amato 2010a, p. 5.

then, on the other hand, it must be said that when examining Procopius' works available to him, Photios only mentions Procopius' *Commentary on Octateuch*, *Kings*, *Chronicles* and *Isaiah*.[30] The well-informed patriarch makes no mention of a Procopian *Refutatio Procli* nor does he ever suggest that such a work existed.

More importantly, Choricius—insist the supporters of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli*—tells us that Procopius embarked upon the refutation of heresies as well. Also this witness makes it theoretically plausible that Procopius authored a work like the *Refutatio Procli*, but actually does not prove it, because Choricius only says that Procopius devoted himself "to the refutation" (πρὸς ἔλεγχον) of the opinions which contradicted the Christian dogma, without further clarifying whether these included philosophical paganism or other Christian heresies. It is surely true that distinguished members of the school of Gaza engaged philosophical paganism (see for instance Zacharias Scholasticus' *Ammonius*, Aeneas of Gaza's *Theophrastus* and the *Commentary on Genesis* by the same Procopius),[31] but it is also true that they engaged other heresies as well. Zacharias, for instance, composed a refutation (ἀντίρρησις) of the Manichaeans.

Procopian scholars also cite other texts authored by eminent representatives of the so-called "school of Gaza" that underwent a process of appropriation or plagiarism by later Byzantine scholars.[32] Of all arguments, this is probably the weakest one. In fact, none of the writings cited as parallel are actually by Procopius, but rather by his disciple, Choricius. More importantly, they are all rhetorical texts such as *encomia* or *ekphraseis*, i.e. they belong to a particular literary genre known for easily allowing later borrowings or even plagiarisims. Quite on the contrary, with regard to theological works such as the *Refutatio Procli* it is very hard to imagine that a prominent theologian like Nicholas could openly plagiarize or re-elaborate on a work which both he and his contemporaries knew as written by Procopius.

Nor is it possible to prove the Procopian authorship of the fragments by referring them to Procopius' *Commentary on Genesis*. In fact, chapters 139 and 146 deny the existence of divine causes other than God and explain the nature of the intratrinitarian procession in far too vague a manner to allow a connection with Procopius' *Commentary*. Procopius had no copyright on these issues, and actually these chapters summarize standard Christian beliefs commonly found in Patristic and Byzantine sources. In particular, the fragments simply

30 Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 206–207, 164b–165a.

31 See Champion 2014, p. 71–195; Sorabji 2015, p. 71–93.

32 Amato 2010a, p. 8–10.

rephrase Proclus' text in order to make it compatible with Christianity.[33] In fact, as we shall elucidate later, it appears that the technical vocabulary of chapters 139 and 146 is reminiscent of middle-Byzantine theology.

We would also like to make a few incidental remarks on the *testimonia* for Procopius' writing against Proclus' *Chaldean Oracles*. The first testimony comes from Michael Psellos. The latter reports that Proclus is said to have called the Hellenic arguments "squalls of words" (λόγων καταιγίδας), as reported by Procopius of Gaza.[34] Since in another passage Psellos refers to the *Chaldean Oracles* and speaks of "the pagan Greek of our day", Westerink believed that here Psellos is quoting from a refutation of the *Chaldean Oracles* by Procopius.[35] However, as Dominique O'Meara (the distinguished editor of Psellos' philosophical work) has elucidated, to connect these two texts is risky, since it is far from clear whether or not the second text, which is a summary used by Psellos elsewhere as well, actually excerpts from Procopius or from another as yet unidentified source of later date.[36] Whittaker supported this latter view when suggesting the existence of a commentary on Gregory the Theologian containing this and other information.[37] To this we shall add that in both passages where Psellos ascribes to Procopius the description of the *Oracles* as "squalls of words", Proclus is described by Psellos in enthusiastic terms, something which would be rather strange if we assume that here Psellos excerpts from Procopius' alleged *Refutation of the Chaldean Oracles*.

The second witness is a *scholion* to Lucian's *Philopseudes* (119.17) which reads: οἷα εἰκὸς τὰ τελεστικά φησι Ἰουλιανοῦ, ἃ Πρόκλος ὑπομνηματίζει, οἷς ὁ Προκόπιος ἀντιφθέγγεται πάνυ δεξιῶς καὶ γενναίως.[38] The authority of this *scholion* has been challenged by Kroll on the basis of its late dating and its absence

33 Unfortunately, the text edited by Angelou does not allow distinguishing between Nicholas' paraphrase of Proclus' text and Nicholas' own comments on it. Perhaps it would have been better to edit the former in italics in order to differentiate those passages where Nicholas is using and citing Proclus' text from those where he elaborates his own critique.

34 Michael Psellos, *Orationes forenses et acta*, 1, 12.293–294.

35 Michael Psellos, *Theologica*, 88.46–53: ὧν δὲ τοιούτων ὀνομάτων τε καὶ δοξῶν ὁ ἐπὶ Μάρκου Ἰουλιανὸς καθηγήσατο, ἐν ἔπεσιν αὐτὰ συγγραψάμενος, ἃ δὴ καὶ ὡς λόγια ἐφυμνεῖται παρὰ τῶν μετὰ ταῦτα. τούτοις δὲ ἐντυχόντες καὶ οἱ καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἕλληνες οὕτω δὴ ἐσεβάσθησαν καὶ ἠγάπησαν, ὡς ἀφεμένους εὐθὺς τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν πρὸς ταῦτα δραμεῖν, καὶ μάλιστα Ἰάμβλιχος καὶ ὁ θεῖος τῷ ὄντι Πρόκλος ἀνήρ· ὁμοῦ τε γὰρ τούτοις συνεγένοντο, καὶ καταιγίδας τὰς Ἑλληνικὰς μεθόδους περὶ τὸν συλλογισμὸν ὠνομάκασι. τοιαύτη μὲν οὖν ἡ τῶν Χαλδαίων πολυαρχία. It is worth noting that this text echoes the description of the Greek demonstrations as "squalls of words" (λόγων καταιγίδας).

36 O'Meara 2013, p. 56.

37 Cf. *supra* p. 98–99.

38 Lucian of Samosata, *Scholia*, v. IV, 224–225.

in the earlier and more important manuscripts of Lucian's work.[39] Westerink prudently recalled, however, that it is theoretically possible for the *scholion* to be an excerpt from an earlier authoritative source.[40] Eager to test Westerink's suggestion, we decided to investigate this matter further. As a result of this, we realized that the manuscript which purportedly transmits the *scholion* is the now lost *codex Graevii*, a manuscript which Graeve used for his seventeenth-century edition of Lucian. While it is not possible to detect information from a direct study of the manuscript itself, it is nevertheless possible to trace the text of this *scholion*, at least tentatively, back to its possible source or to the context in which it originated. This is what Martin Sicherl did in an article published in 1960. Sicherl brought forth convincing arguments suggesting that the *scholion* goes back to the very source of the first testimony for Procopius' writing against Proclus' *Chaldean Oracles* mentioned above, namely the same Michael Psellos, who in fact is known for having read Lucian's *Philopseudes*.[41] The consequence of this finding is that we do not have anymore two distinct and independent witnesses to Procopius' refutation of Proclus' commentary on the *Chaldean Oracles*, but rather only one, the aforementioned Psellos. Whether the latter had access to this Procopian work or only to a later source (as suggested by Whittaker and O'Meara) is still matter of debate and is not relevant to the scope of the present paper. What is pretty clear is that there is no way this tenous evidence favoring the existence of a Procopian refutation of Proclus' scholarship on the *Chaldean Oracles* can be used to demonstrate the existence of a Procopian *Refutation of Proclus' Elements of Theology*.

4 Sources and Stylistic Pattern of the Fragments

Then come Stiglmayr's arguments. For the sake of brevity, we cannot comprehensively detail Stiglmayr's arguments, but we will focus on a few that also allow us to introduce new evidence. For instance, Stiglmayr references Trinitarian language as proof for a twelfth-century dating. This reveals the distinctive trace of John of Damascus' and Photios' Trinitarian speculation and a strong

39 In *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertums Wissenschaft*, X, col. 15. Actually the scholion has not been included by Rabe in his 1906 edition of the scholia to Lucian's work (Rabe 1906).

40 Cf. Westerink 1942, p. 276–277.

41 Sicherl 1960, in part. p. 18–19. This might well explain why the scholion at hand is not found in the earlier ninth-tenth-century manuscripts preserving Lucian's works, namely because it originated in a later source such as Psellos.

emphasis on the procession of the Spirit *ex solo Patre* typical of the anti-Latin theological literature of which Nicholas is an eminent figure.[42] In what follows we shall corroborate Stiglmayr's findings and we shall provide further internal evidence suggesting that 1) chapters 139 and 146 are consistent with the rest of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* and that 2) the language in these chapters reveals a theological concern that hardly fits within the view of the Procopian authorship of the *Refutatio Procli*.

The first example comes from the refutation of prop. 22 of the *Elements of Theology* (section 22 of the *Refutatio Procli*): "All that exists primally and originally in each rank is one, and not two or more than two, but unique" (Πᾶν τὸ πρώτως καὶ ἀρχικῶς ὂν καθ' ἑκάστην ἄξιν ἕν ἐστι, καὶ οὔτε δύο οὔτε πλείω δυεῖν, ἀλλὰ μονογενὲς πᾶν).[43] Before embarking upon the refutation of the proposition at hand, Nicholas remarks: "and thus someone might even use this proposition against the Latins, who say that the Spirit has two principles, Father and Son" (οὕτω δ' ἂν καὶ χρήσαιτό τις τῷ θεωρήματι τούτῳ κατὰ Λατίνων τῶν δύο τὰ ἀρχικὰ αἴτια τοῦ πνεύματος λεγόντων, πατέρα καὶ υἱόν).[44] As Stiglmayr points out, such a statement can only be understood in the context of the *Filioque* controversy which led to the great schism of 1054.[45] Nicholas, who engaged the *Filioque* thesis at length, knew it terribly well.

To Stiglmayr's remark, we shall add that in one of his anti-Latin treatises Nicholas summarizes the Latin position as follows:

> For this reason, if the Father and the Son are one and they are one also in nature, one must concede that just as [the Spirit] proceeds from the Father, so it proceeds from his Son (in fact this is the mistake implied in the innovation introduced in the Latin dogma).
>
> Εἰ διότι ἕν εἰσι Πατὴρ καὶ Υἱός, εἰσὶ δὲ πάντως ἓν τῇ φύσει, διὰ τοῦτο ὡς ἐκ τοῦ Πατρός, οὕτω καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ δοτέον ἐκπορεύεσθαι τὸ Πνεῦμα (τοῦτο γὰρ ἡ καινοφωνία τοῦ λατινικοῦ δόγματος ἀπαιτεῖ).[46]

A similar text is found in Nicholas' treatise on the Holy Spirit addressed to the *megas domestikos*:

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42 Stiglmayr 1899, p. 289–293.

43 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 30.14–15.

44 All English translation of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* are by Robinson (2014), with slight modifications. The English text of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* is that by Dodds.

45 See Stiglmayr 1899, p. 290. On the *Filioque* see Siecinski 2010.

46 *Bibliotheca ecclesiastica*, p. 363.7–10.

> For because of this we will neither say that the Spirit is a divine indwelling, nor that it proceeds from the Son, which is the Latin madness.
>
> ὡς διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα λέγειν εἶναι ἐμφύσημα καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐκπορεύεσθαι, τῆς τῶν Λατίνων ἐστὶ παρανοίας, οὐχ ἡμέτερον λέγειν.[47]

Indeed, one may fruitfully recall that Amato's thesis takes into account these anachronisms and explains them as resulting from Nicholas' re-elaboration of Procopius' *Refutatio*. But if we look at chapter 146, which in Amato's view is authentically Procopian, we read that:

> Only the begetting of the Son from the one and only Father and [the] projection from the same of the one and only Holy Spirit would be called a divine procession without beginning and without end, [the begetting and the procession] according to which the paternal and original, or rather pre-original Monad, moved toward the Dyad, which is beheld in the Son and the Spirit, and at the Trinity come to a halt, as our theologian Gregory says
>
> *Or.* 29.2, *PG* 36, 76B
>
> Θεία πρόοδος ἄναρχος καὶ ἀτελεύτητος μόνη ἂν λέγοιτο ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου πατρὸς γέννησις τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου υἱοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πρόβλησις τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου ἁγίου πνεύματος, καθ' ἣν ἡ πατρικὴ τε καὶ ἀρχικὴ, μᾶλλον δὲ προάναρχος μονὰς εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα, τὴν ἐν υἱῷ θεωρουμένην καὶ πνεύματι, μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη, καθά φησι ὁ ἡμέτερος Θεολόγος Γρηγόριος.[48]

This text and the quotation from Gregory in it have been regarded as a key argument in previous scholarship on the *Refutatio Procli*. For instance, it prompted Whittaker to suggest a link with the commentary tradition on Gregory of Nazianzus.[49] And yet, we totally agree with Stiglmayr that the first lines of the text unmistakably cast the citation from Gregory within the frame of the middle Byzantine theory of the procession of the Spirit *ex solo Patre* and of the theological dispute with the Latins.[50] Furthermore, it should be noted that the word πρόβλησις, here "procession", is extremely rare and never appears in Patristic texts as referring to the procession of the Spirit. The only other

47 *Bibliotheca ecclesiastica*, p. 212.5–6.
48 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 133.22.
49 Whittaker 1975, p. 313.
50 Stiglmayr 1899, p. 297.

occurrence is in section 7 of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli*.[51] This suggests that the author of section 146 is the same as the author of section 7. The fact that in section 7 the author casts the term πρόβλησις within the technical Byzantine distinction between the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Spirit is consistent with Stiglmayr's idea that the author is not a late-antique one.

In other words, right from the beginning of the "authentically" Procopian fragment of chapter 146 one finds an element which cannot be Procopian. By contrast, it belongs to the Middle Byzantine anti-Latin controversy and is consistent with the other passages from Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* and his anti-Latin treatises. In particular, the first sentence of chapter 146 connects with section 22 of the *Refutatio Procli*, where Nicholas questions the Latin *Filioque* as a case of causation by two principles (the Father and the Son), instead of the Father alone. Furthermore, no one seems to have noticed that the above-mentioned citation from Gregory appears in other sections of the *Refutatio Procli* and is explained by Nicholas with the theological vocabulary typical of Byzantine theology after Photius. See, for example:

> 5.10–15: διὰ τοῦτο μονάς, φησὶν ὁ Θεολόγος Γρηγόριος, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη. διότι γοῦν ἓν καὶ τοῦτο γόνιμόν τε καὶ αὐτοκίνητον, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τρία, καὶ διότι τρία (καὶ ταῦτα οὐχ ὑπαρίθμια ἀλλ' ὑποστατικὰ παντὸς ἀριθμοῦ), διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἕν, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ ἓν καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ τριὰς ἡ μόνη καὶ ὑπερούσιος.
>
> 20.17–20: ἥτις κατὰ τὸν Θεολόγον Γρηγόριον ὡς μονὰς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς δυάδα φυσικῶς κινηθεῖσα μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη, δημιουργικῶς δὲ δι' ὑπερβολὴν ἀγαθότητος κινουμένη παράγει πάντα τὰ ὄντα, τά τε δευτέρως αὐτοκίνητα καὶ τὰ ἑτεροκίνητα.
>
> 27.26–30: δῆλον δ' ὅτι νοερῶς καὶ οἰκείως ἑαυτῷ, ὥσπερ καὶ τὴν μονάδα, δηλονότι τὸν ἕνα πατέρα, μοναδικῶς, ἔφησεν ὁ θεολόγος, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κινηθεῖσαν εἰς δυάδα, τουτέστιν εἰς ἑνὸς υἱοῦ γέννησιν καὶ ἑνὸς πνεύματος προβολήν, μέχρι τριάδος στῆναι.

Indeed, supporters of the existence of a Procopian *Refutatio Procli* might argue that Nicholas took this citation from the Procopian version of chapter 146 and used it elsewhere in the *Refutatio*. Alternatively, they might argue that the pres-

51 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 7, 11,19.

ence of the citation from Gregory belongs to the residual part of the text which Nicholas incorporated into his own version of the text. Such an argument would be to no avail. In fact, we have demonstrated that chapter 146 presents the Gregory passage as supporting the typically Byzantine procession of the Spirit *ex solo Patre*. Therefore, chapter 146 can no more be regarded as a Procopian text and, if this is the case, neither can the other sections of the *Refutatio Procli* where the citation from Gregory appears. On the contrary, the presence of Gregory throughout the *Refutatio Procli* ascribed to Nicholas suggests a consistent pattern. Furthemore, the frequent use of this very same Gregory passage in the other anti-Latin writers and Byzantine theologians confirms the pattern as well.[52] Nicholas himself is among these writers of anti-Latin treatises, which is evidenced by:

> Niketas Stethatos, *Contra Latinos et de processione spiritus sancti*, ed. Michel, 375.12–16: δῆλον, καὶ τίνων φώτων πατὴρ ὁ πατήρ, ὅτι τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, εἷς τῶν δύο, οὐ τοῦ ἑνὸς οἱ δύο· ἐπεὶ καὶ καθ' ὅλου μονὰς δυάδος ἀρχή, οὐ δυὰς μονάδος· **διὸ καὶ «μονὰς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς» φησὶν ὁ μέγας ἐν θεολόγοις Γρηγόριος, «εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη»**.
>
> Eustratios of Nicaea, *Περὶ τοῦ τρόπου, τιμῆς τε καὶ προσκυνήσεως τῶν σεβασμίων εἰκόνων συλλογιστικὴ ἀπόδειξις*, ed. Demetrakopoulos, 152.31–33: καὶ **διὰ τοῦτο μονὰς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη, ὁ μέγας ἐν θεολογίᾳ φησὶ Γρηγόριος**.
>
> Nicholas of Methone, *Νικολάου ἐπισκόπου Μεθώνης κεφαλαιώδεις ἔλεγχοι τοῦ παρὰ Λατίνοις καινοφανοῦς δόγματος, τοῦ ὅτι τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐκπορεύεται*, ed. Demetrakopoulos, 359.15–27: Ἔτι δύο μὲν κινήσεις, ἤγουν δυνάμεις καὶ ἐνεργείας μιᾶς ὑποστάσεως, ἠκούσαμέν τε καὶ ἔγνωμεν καὶ οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν διηγήσαντο ἡμῖν. **Μονὰς γάρ, φησὶν ὁ θεολόγος Γρηγόριος, ἀπαρχῆς εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα (τουτέστιν ὁ Πατὴρ εἰς γέννησιν τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ πρόεσιν τοῦ Πνεύματος) μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη**· εἰς δύο δὲ αἴτια, ὁπωσοῦν διαφέροντα, τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ μίαν ὑπόστασιν ἀναφερομένην οὐδαμόθεν ἐμάθομεν, εἰ μὴ νῦν πρῶτον παρὰ τῆς καινοφωνίας ἀκούομεν, ἥτις ἐκ δυοῖν αἰτίων διαφερόντων κατὰ τὰς ὑποστατικὰς ἰδιότητας ὑφιστῶσα τὸ Πνεῦμα, οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως μὴ τῇ διαφορᾷ τῶν αἰτίων διαφόρους καὶ ὑποστάσεις συναπαρτίσει καὶ τομὴν ἐπαφήσει κατὰ τῆς ἀτμήτου καὶ ἑνιαίας καὶ ἁπλῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος ὑποστάσεως.

52 See Trizio 2014, p. 206.

This latter text is particularly interesting in that in it Nicholas links the *Filioque* to a procession from two causes rather than one. This is exactly his aim in chapters 22 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli*: ascribing the divine procession to one and the same cause, namely the Father, and excluding that other principles, such as the Son, can be cause the way the Father is cause in the proper sense. Thus, the first lines of chapter 146 are pretty much consistent with the anti-Filioquist undertones in the rest of the *Refutatio Procli*.

While looking for stylistic features of the *Refutatio Procli* ascribed to Nicholas we realized that just as he cites Gregory in chapter 146, so does he consistently in the rest of the *Refutatio*.[53] This suggests once more the existence of a common stylistic pattern between chapter 146 and the rest of the *Refutatio Procli*. However, since we have demonstrated that in chapter 146 the quote from Gregory reflects Nicholas' anti-Latin concerns, it would not be possible to consider this and the other citations from Gregory as residual elements of Procopius' alleged *Refutatio*.

Another passage supports the consistency between ch. 146 and the rest of the *Refutatio Procli*, reading:

> by contrast, the procession according to illumination proceeds thence as perpetual and without end, bestowing to some in first distribution, to others in second distribution and so forth, as the divine effulgences pour forth according to transmission in correspondence with the ranks or stations of each, even to the last ones among them.
>
> ἡ δὲ κατ' ἔλλαμψιν ἀΐδιος ἐκεῖθεν προβαίνει καὶ ἀτελεύτητος τοῖς μὲν πρωτοδότως, τοῖς δὲ δευτεροδότως καὶ καθ' ἑξῆς, τῶν θείων ἀπαυγασμάτων προχεομένων κατὰ μετάδοσιν ἀναλόγως ταῖς ἑκάστων τάξεσιν εἴτουν στάσεσι μέχρι καὶ τῶν ἐν ἐκείνοις ἐσχάτων.[54]

This text reflects a passage from ch. 70:

> if every illumination from above proceeds from the one and first principle, it is plainly evident that nothing of the things after the first principle projects its own illumination to the things after it, but rather, that

53 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 5.11; 12.31–32; 14.27–28; 17.5–7; 20.17–18; 22.21–22; 25.19–21; 26.30–27.1; 27.28.28; 41.3–5; 49.2; 59.16–17; 89.16–17; 101.20–21; 117.11–12; 133.20–21; 137.17–18; 146.2–3; 149.15; 149.22–26; 152.30–153.1; 168.23–25; 174.7–8.

54 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 134.7–10.

> which is immediately after the principle, since it has illumination from that primary-giving, transmits this to those after it by secondary-giving.
>
> Εἰ πᾶσα **ἔλλαμψις** ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τῆς μιᾶς καὶ πρώτης ἀρχῆς πρόεισιν, εὔδηλον ὡς οὐδὲν τῶν μετὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν οἰκείαν **ἔλλαμψιν** προβάλλει τοῖς μετ' αὐτό, ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ εὐθὺς μετὰ τὴν ἀρχήν, ὡς ἐξ ἐκείνης **πρωτοδότως** ἔσχεν ἔλλαμψιν, ταύτην **δευτεροδότως** τοῖς μετ' αὐτὸ διαδίδωσι.[55]

This as well as the previous textual parallels are consistent with the hypothesis that the *Refutatio Procli* has been written by one and the same author and that this author is Nicholas.

5 A Historian's View

Another argument against the attribution of the *Refutatio Procli* to Nicholas alone is that to compose such a work in the twelfth century would not make any sense, as by that time the pagan followers of Proclus were all virtually gone. On this basis, for instance, even Amato, while accepting the hypothesis that Nicholas re-elaborated on an earlier Procopian work, concludes that Nicholas' work is a merely rhetorical one insofar as there were no real opponents, i.e. no real followers of Proclus, at the time.[56] We disagree with this view and we believe that Procopius scholars from Dräseke to Amato have underestimated the historical circumstances surrounding the circulation of Proclus' work in the twelfth century. These suggest that far from being a merely rhetorical work with no real target, the *Refutatio Procli* (be it entirely the work of Nicholas or a re-elaboration of an earlier Procopian work) fits in well with the twelfth-century Byzantine intellectual history. In what follows we shall summarize the evidence.[57]

In the eleventh century Michael Psellos celebrated Proclus as the best among Greek philosophers[58] and devoted much attention to the *Elements of Theology*.[59] Psellos' pupil, John Italos, discussed at length *Elements of Theology* 69,

55 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 71.10–14.

56 Cf. *supra* p. 98.

57 On this topic see Podskalsky 1976 and Angelou 1984, p. LIII–LXIV. See also Robinson's paper in this volume.

58 Reinsch 2014, p. 6.38.3–5.

59 Michael Psellos, *Opuscula*, v. 1, 7, p. 29.45–46, *Theologica*, 11, p. 43.21–24. On this subject see O'Meara 2014.

where Proclus expounds his whole-and-parts theory,[60] while in the first half of the twelfth century Eustratios of Nicaea excerpted from this and other Proclean works as well. Possibly around the same period Ioane Petritsi translated the *Elements of Theology* into Georgian and wrote a commentary on it.[61]

Nonetheless, Proclus' most passionate readers already admitted that he (and the other Neoplatonists) were often incompatible with Christian dogma.[62] In one of his meteorological treatises Michael Psellos writes, with regard to the demonology of the *Chaldean Oracles*, that Proclus is just a "story-teller" or "charlatan" (ὁ τερατολόγος),[63] i.e. someone who tells absurd stories, while the *Chaldean Oracles* themselves are said to be "foolish talks" (ληρωδίαι),[64] an expression which among Church Fathers was used with respect to heresies.[65] In the same vein, after summarizing the Hellenic view on the evocation of deities, Psellos comments: "These were the absurd teachings of Porphyry, Iamblichus and Proclus the story-teller. We wish to make it clear that none of these teachings is a true one, but we have to learn not only to discern the therapeutic herbs, but also the poisonous ones, in order to become healthy with the former and to avoid the latter, without embracing extraneous doctrines as if they were ours".[66]

There are several similar later statements. George Tornikès' *Funeral Oration* on princess Anna Komnene is one of the best examples. In this text, written only a few years earlier than Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli*,[67] Tornikès adopts the very same strategy as Psellos: he lists philosophers and associates them with doctrines which cannot be reconciled with the orthodoxy accepted at the time. In this way the author suggests that Anna's fondness for philosophy was a pious one. The first to appear is Aristotle, whom Tornikès blames for his theory on the eternity of the world and the denial of the Creator and divine providence.[68]

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60 John Italos, *Quaestiones Quodlibetales*, p. 15.

61 On this Günther 2007, p. 1–25. See also Alexidze 2014.

62 Cf. e.g. Michael Psellos, *Opuscula*, 19, p. 89.28–33.

63 The word bears a strong negative meaning. Cf. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ad loc.

64 Michael Psellos, *Philosophica Minora*, op. 19, p. 74,167–179. Michael Italos, *Lettres et discours*, p. 113.17–20.

65 See *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ad loc.

66 Michael Psellos, *Theologica*, op. 74, p. 297.145–149: Ταῦτα δὴ Πορφύριος καὶ Ἰάμβλιχος καὶ ὁ τερατολόγος Πρόκλος ἐλήρησαν· ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἀποπεφάνθω μηδὲν τούτων τυγχάνειν ἀληθές. ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς γε οὐ τὰς θεραπευούσας μόνον βοτάνας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς φαρμακώδεις εἰδέναι ὀφείλομεν, ὡς ἂν ταύταις μὲν ὑγιαζοίμεθα, ἐκείνων δὲ πόρρω γιγνοίμεθα καὶ μὴ ὡς οἰκείοις τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις περιπίπτοιμεν. Michael Psellos, *Theologica*, op. 90, p. 354.52–56. Other similar texts by Psellos are discussed in Maltese 1996.

67 See Angelou 1984, p. XLII–XLIII.

68 George Tornikès, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 285.14–16. On this allegation, see Bydén 2013, p. 159–162 and p. 164–165.

Then comes Plato, who is praised for his acceptance of a Demiurge, creator of the Universe, but whose doctrine of separate ideas is rejected as impious.[69] On the human soul, according to Tornikès, Anna stands more with the Platonists in order to avoid the traditional prejudice on the perishability of Aristotle's soul. Yet Tornikès adds that she rejected the Platonic metempsychosis and accepted the more nuanced understanding of Aristotle's psychology as elaborated by earlier commentators that sees only the lower faculties as perishable, whereas the intellect is eternal and immortal.[70] A bit later in the text, the Neoplatonists Proclus and Iamblichus are mentioned in opposition to Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite and his alleged master Hierotheos.[71] Having said that princess Anna followed the latter two, rather than the former two, Tornikès suggests that Anna's education, although comprehensive, was animated by the awareness of the limits of ancient philosophy. In this respect Tornikès depicts the figure of the ideal intellectual of the time as someone who mixes intellectual curiosity with an awareness of the limits and realm of validity of the earlier philosophical tradition.

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69 George Tornikès, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 287.12–15.

70 George Tornikès, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 289.3–19. The Byzantine inherited from the earlier Patristic literature and from the earlier philosophical authority of Atticus (see Atticus, *Fragments*, fr. 7bis) the prejudice that saw Aristotle's theory on the soul as purporting its corruption once the body ceases to exist. Some of these witnesses are collected in Bydén 2013, p. 163–164. However, the solution developed in Late Antiquity, according to which only the intellect survives the corruption of the body was equally known in Byzantium. This is what Tornikès refers to when he mentions the notion of "double entelecheia" (cf. George Tornikès, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 289.17) as that which allows him to accept Aristotle's psychology. A very similar textual parallel is found in Priscianus Lydus' commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*. See Ps.-Simplicius (*re vera* Priscianus Lydus) p. 4.30–5.3: καὶ ἐντελέχεια καὶ τὸ χρώμενον ὡς ὁ πλωτὴρ τῆς νεώς· διττὴ γὰρ ἡ ἐντελέχεια, ἡ μὲν καθ' ἥν ἐστι ναῦς, ἡ δὲ ὡς πλωτήρ. Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν ὡς εἴρηται κοινῇ πάσαις ταῖς τῶν θνητῶν ζῴων ψυχαῖς τὴν εἰδητικὴν αὐτῶν ἀποδίδωσιν αἰτίαν διττὴν οὖσαν. ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ καθ' ἑκάστην ἐπεξιὼν ἅμα μὲν τὰς διαφορὰς αὐτῶν παραδίδωσιν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τὸ κοινῇ πάσαις ὑπάρχον ἰδιοτρόπως καθ' ἑκάστην θεωρεῖ, ὅπερ ἡ ἀποδεικτικὴ παραγγέλλει ἐπιστήμη, καὶ τὰς μὲν μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ ὀργανικὸν ἀποκλινούσας, τὰς δὲ κατὰ τὸ χρώμενον ἱσταμένας μᾶλλον ὁρᾷ. καὶ πᾶσαν μὲν εἶναι ψυχὴν ἐντελέχειαν τοῦ ὀργανικοῦ σώματος παραδίδωσιν, οὐ πᾶσαν δὲ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἑαυτῆς δύναμιν· σαφῶς γὰρ ὁ νοῦς εἴρηται μηδὲν συνέχων σῶμα καὶ μηδὲ ὡς ὀργάνῳ τῷ σώματι χρώμενος. Michael Psellos, a witness closer to Tornikès who knew Ps.-Simplicius' commentary (according to Steel 2003, p. 28), refers to the notion of "double entelecheia" as well. Cf. Michael Psellos, *Opuscula*, 13, p. 44.22–25. As the editor of Psellos' text diligently noted, the whole text is made out of excerpts from Philoponus' commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*. The most relevant Byzantine witnesses that agree with the commentators on this point have been collected in Bydén 2013, p. 174, n. 74.

71 George Tornikès, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 299.24–30.

The same strategy had been adopted in Anna's *Alexiad*, written not so many years before the *Refutatio Procli*. While reconstructing the events that led to the condemnation of John Italos,[72] Anna depicts Italos as a reader of Proclus, Plato, Porphyry and Iamblichus, on the one hand, and of Aristotle's logic, on the other, who had no awareness of the value of the Neoplatonic doctrines and their limits. Thus, just as Tornikès depicted Anna's pious approach to philosophy by opposing Proclus and Iamblichus to Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite and Hierotheos, Anna compares Italos' undiscerning approach to the pious attitude of her parents towards philosophical literature. In particular Anna's intermezzo on her parents opposes the books by Proclus, Iamblichus and the like to those by the Church Fathers, in particular Maximus the Confessor, whose writings Anna's mother always brought with her, even to breakfast. In Anna's narrative this opposition exemplifies the difference between true Wisdom and the wisdom of this world.[73]

However, Tornikès' and Anna's rhetoric should not be understood as fictional. Their statements actually reflect the way the philosophy of the Neoplatonists (and that of Aristotle's non-logical works as well) was taught even by those who, like Psellos, were passionate readers of Neoplatonic books. In fact, as we have seen before, this does not prevent Psellos from accusing Porphyry and Iamblichus of talking non-sense with regard to their account of the causation process. In this very same passage, which in many respects resembles that discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Proclus is questionned for his "fairy tales" (τερατολογίαι) on the same subject. Psellos' words could not have been clearer: "let us dismiss Proclus' fairy tales on the way things come to be in the world",[74] i.e. through intermediary causes, something which in Psellos' view compromises the Christian prerogatives of the First Cause as the only Cause of the Universe. This critical approach to Proclus anticipates Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli*, where Nicholas criticizes Proclus on this and other topics as well. In this respect, one cannot help but notice that the *Refutatio Procli* fits in very well with the twelfth-century Byzantine intellectual history.

In the previous sections of this paper we demonstrated that Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* (including the supposedly Procopian fragments) conveys the author's

72 On Italos' condemnation see Clucas 1981, to be updated and corrected with Gouillard 1985.

73 Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, p. 5.9.1–3.

74 Michael Psellos, *Philosophica Minora*, p. 123.102–105: ἐκ μιᾶς γὰρ ἀρχῆς πάντα γεγέννηται, ὡς τὰ ἱερά φασι λόγια, καὶ οὐχ ἕτερον ἀφ' ἑτέρου, ὡς τὰ Πορφυρίου καὶ Ἰαμβλίχου ληροῦσι περὶ τῶν προόδων συντάγματα. ἀποπεμπέσθωσαν δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ αἱ τοῦ Πρόκλου τερατολογίαι περὶ τῶν ἀπογεννήσεων [...].

concerns for contemporary theological issues such as the *Filioque*.[75] There is more. Three times in the *Refutatio Procli* Nicholas cautiously accepts Proclus' theory that the effects revert upon the causes, but warns the reader not to understand this in terms of Origen's *apokatastasis*.[76] The author here suggests that Origen derived his *apokatastasis* theory from Proclus. Such a statement would be rather bizarre if the author were Procopius of Gaza, who would surely have known that this was chronologically impossible. However, it fits well with Nicholas' theological endeavours. In fact, Nicholas wrote a theological treatise on 1 Cor. 15.28 in order to dissuade contemporary readers of this text from understanding the sentence ἵνα ᾖ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι as a reference to Origen's *apokatastasis*.[77] The interesting thing is that the expression τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι occurs in prop. 103 of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* as well, where Proclus writes: "All things are in all things, but in each according to its proper nature" (Πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἑκάστῳ).[78] All Proclus wants to say here is that participation takes place according to the status of the participant. Nicholas' comments on this text make it clear that all things are in God insofar as He is their cause and that God is in all things according to participation, but not according to existence, for, if so, each thing would be indistinguishable from the others.[79] Doubtless Nicholas must have connected these texts in that they are both part of one and the same concern, namely avoiding confusion between Cause and effects, Creator and creatures.

From this it is pretty clear that the *Refutatio Procli* reflects theological concerns discussed by Nicholas elsewhere. This is even more evident when one compares the *Refutatio Procli* with Nicholas' efforts in the controversy over the liturgical expression "For you are the Offerer, the Offered, the One who receives" (Σὺ εἶ ὁ προσφέρων καὶ προσφερόμενος καὶ προσδεχόμενος). It all started around 1155, when Nikephoros Basilakes and Michael of Thessaloniki, two teachers in the Patriarchal School of Constantinople, suggested that the rendering of Christ simultaneously as victim, officiant and receiver is self-contradictory.[80] By contrast, according to these teachers, the sacrifice was offered to the Father alone. Nikephoros and Michael were condemned in 1156, but found a power ally in the patriarch-elect of Antioch, Soterichos Panteugenes. The latter is probably

75 Cf. *supra* p. 103–107.

76 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 41.12–14; 42.13–15; 149.27–28.

77 Cf. Angelou 1984, p. LXIII.

78 Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, prop. 103, p. 92.13–16.

79 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, 103, p. 99.30–32.

80 See Kazdhan, Epstein 1985, p. 160–161; Magdalino 1993, p. 279–289; Felmy 2011.

to be identified with the Soterichos who was author of a work on the eternal generation of the Son addressed to Patriarch Michael II Oxeites (Korkouas) (1143–1146) in MS Angel.gr. 43, f. 189v–192.

Soterichos is an interesting figure in the reception of Plato and Platonism in twelfth-century Byzantium. In order to support his view on the nature of Christ's sacrifice he composed a Platonic dialogue;[81] when questioned by the synod, he answered with an apology whose words echo here and there the vocabulary of Plato's *Apology of Socrates*.[82] More importantly, Soterichos may be the author of a certain number of scholia to Nicomachus' *Introduction to Arithmetic* largely taken from Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus*.[83]

Both because of his view on this theological controversy and because of his fondness for Platonism, Soterichos exemplified everything Nicholas disliked. In fact, he was personally involved in the controversy over Christ's sacrifice and challenged Soterichos's teaching in a work known as *Refutation of the teaching of Soterichos Panteugenes, Patriarch-elect of Antioch* (Ἀντίρρησις πρὸς τὰ γραφέντα παρὰ Σωτηρίχου τοῦ προβληθέντος Πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας). This text is important for two reasons: first, its existence demonstrates that Nicholas was accustomed to composing works in the form of a refutation; second, it is important because, just as in the case of his opposition to the *Filioque* and in that of the right interpretation of I Cor. 15.28, Nicholas here saw the controversy with Soterichos through the lens of his opposition to Proclus' Neoplatonism. Let us give an example of this.

Following Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* 1.22 (83a33), section 184 of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* dismisses *in toto* Proclus' classes of divine soul and Gods as "twittering" (τερετίσματα). Just as Aristotle had rejected Plato's theory of forms insofar as this treats concepts as self-subsisting realities, so the Christian Nicholas challenges Proclus' classes of gods and divine souls as mere notions with no existence beyond the mind that conceives them.[84] Unsurprisingly, this very same text parallels Nicholas' *Refutatio* (Ἀντίρρησις) of Soterichos. According to Nicholas, while defending the view that the sacrifice is offered to the Father alone, Soterichos had denied the very status of the Trinity and had considered the Father and the Son as two distinct and independent substances. According to Nicholas, Soterichos does away with the notion of person and relies exclusively on that of nature. But this would be absurd, for—claims Nicholas—not

81 See Spingou 2017.

82 See Trizio 2019, p. 596–597.

83 Part of the tradition of the scholia ascribes them to Michael Psellos. See Moore 2005, PHI 72a e PHI 72b. See Hofstetter 2018.

84 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 184, 160.18–23.

even Plato introduced forms or ideas as self-subsisting entities or natures.[85] Intriguingly, Nicholas attributes to Plato a theory according to which genus and species, understood as ideas, can be more or less general and are called "henads". Obviously here Nicholas attributes a well-known Proclean doctrine to Plato.[86] By the same token, when Nicholas refers to Plato's distinction among primary and secondary deities he alludes to Proclus' classifications of souls and deities.[87] Just as he did in the *Refutatio Procli*, in his *Refutatio Soterichi*, Nicholas mentions Aristotle's description of the Platonic ideas as "twittering" (τερετίσματα).[88]

From what has been said, it seems that Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* conveys the main theological controversies of the time as if these could be traced back to one and the same source: Proclus. In other words, it seems that in Nicholas' view the most important theological controversies of his time (the *Filioque*, the interpretation of 1 Cor. 15.28, the dispute over Christ's sacrifice) could all be addressed through the prism of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*. In the end that is what Nicholas himself suggests in the prologue of the *Refutatio Procli*, where he explicitly intends to prevent those Christian readers of Proclus from slipping into blasphemous heresies.[89] We believe that these included Nicholas' opponents in the theological controversies in which he was involved as a theologian.

6 Another Incongruence: The Use of Aristotle in the *Refutatio Procli*

Another feauture of the *Refutatio Procli* transmitted as Nicholas' is the distinctive Aristotelianism of its author. Nicholas exploits Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite in order to contest Proclus' errors in theology, but when attacking Proclus for his philosophical mistakes, Nicholas makes use of Aristotle's physical theories as corrective of Proclus' errors.[90] Section 96, for instance, challenges Proclus' theorem that "the power of every finite body, if it is infinite, is incorporeal."[91]

85 *Bibliotheca ecclesiastica*, p. 324.9–27. Text discussed also in Golitsis 2014, p. 48 in connection to the scholia to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in MS Par.gr. 1853.

86 On which see Chlup 2012, p. 212–219.

87 *Bibliotheca ecclesiastica*, p. 324.14–19: καθ' ὅσον καὶ πρώτας εἶναι ταύτας καὶ αὐθυποστάτους οὐσίας εἴτουν φύσεις, μάλιστα τὰς καθολικωτέρας, ἐξ ὧν καὶ τὰς μερικωτέρας ὑφεστάναι διισχυρίζεται, ὡς καὶ θεοὺς ταύτας πρώτους καὶ δευτέρους ἀναγορεύειν, κἀκ τούτων αὖθις τἄλλα λέγειν ὑφίστασθαι. See Chlup 2012, p. 119–127.

88 *Bibliotheca ecclesiastica*, p. 324.19–23.

89 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, p. 2.6–12.

90 See Trizio 2014, p. 207.

91 Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, prop. 96.

Nicholas here rejects as superfluous Proclus' restriction of the principle at hand to finite bodies alone on the basis that, as Aristotle states in *Physics* 3.5.205b35–206a7, there is no such thing as an infinite body.[92] Accordingly, in section 94 of the *Refutatio Procli*, Nicholas criticises Proclus' theorem that "all perpetuity is a certain infinity, but not every infinity is perpetuity" by recalling that according to Aristotle's *On the Heavens* 1.5–9 there is only one world and this cannot be infinite in nature.[93]

By contrast, as Michael W. Champion has elucidated, along with the refusal of other philosophical sources, Procopius of Gaza's known work endorses a rather negative attitude towards Aristotle's physics and cosmology. For example, in his *Commentary on Genesis* Procopius elaborates a powerful rejection of the cornerstones of Aristotle's physical theory, such as Aristotle's prime matter (cf. e.g. *Metaphysics* 7.3.1028b36–1029a20; *Physics*, 4.2.209b6–11), as something that has no quality, dimension or form.[94] In the same work, Procopius dismisses the Aristotelian arguments on the eternity of matter (*In de caelo* 3.2.301b30–302a9; *Physics* 1.9.192a27–32) and restores the Christian view on this subject.[95] It is surely true that in all these cases Procopius contests Aristotle as one of the several Greek philosophers supporting unacceptable views on creation, but still the difference in the treatment of Aristotle in the *Commentary on Genesis* and in the *Refutatio Procli* is so striking that it is hard, if not impossible, to believe that these works belong to one and the same author. Nor does the positive use of Aristotle found in the *Refutatio Procli* correspond with other late-antique works similar to the *Commentary on Genesis*, such as, for instance, Ps.-Justin's *Confutatio quorundam Aristotelis dogmatum*, a work possibly coming from the milieu of Gaza.[96]

On the contrary, the acceptance of Aristotle in the *Refutatio Procli* resembles the wider twelfth-century reception of Aristotle as a safe authority compatible with Christianity *vis-à-vis* the more dangerous Platonic source-material. Two witnesses from this period are relevant. The first witness is the inaugural lecture given around the mid-twelfth century by Michael III 'Anchialos' on the occasion of his appointment as consul of the philosophers. Here Michael promises to stick to the safer Aristotelian logic and meteorology and to avoid the more dangerous Platonic doctrines.[97] The second witness comes from a set

92 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, 96, p. 94.22–24.
93 Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus'* Elements of Theology, 94, p. 93.12–13.
94 Procopius of Gaza, *Commentary on Genesis*, p. 5.111–10.250. Cf. Champion 2014, p. 112–113.
95 Procopius of Gaza, *Commentary on Genesis*, p. 5.111–10.250. Cf. Champion 2014, p. 114.
96 Cf. Boeri 2009.
97 Browning 1961, p. 190.103–110. On the dating of the text, see Polemis 2011.

of twelfth-century scholia preserved in MS Par.gr. 1853 (f. 225v–308r). Here an anomyous scholiast wrote in the margin of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* his own personal remarks, which were mostly sympathetic towards Aristotle's philosophy and rather critical of Plato. As Pantelis Golitsis elucidates, there are strong philological similarities between the vocabulary of the scholia and Nicholas of Methone's distinctive antiplatonism.[98]

Clearly the positive appraisal of Aristotle's philosophy in the *Refutatio Procli* exemplifies twelfth-century intellectual trends. One can indeed contend that the passages of the *Refutatio Procli* where Nicholas sympathizes with Aristotle belong to Nicholas' alleged re-elaboration of an earlier version of the text by Procopius. And, yet, this positive usage of Aristotle only adds substance to the enormous pile of arguments favoring Nicholas' authorship of the text, which is so large that at a certain point one gets the impression that Nicholas had no need of an earlier version of the *Refutatio* and that nowhere in the text does the presence of an earlier version by Procopius appear evident at all.

7 The Fragments: A Philologist's View

We have already lengthily discussed the content and historical circumstances of the fragments of the *Refutatio Procli* found in the Vatican manuscripts. Let us now present the fragments from a philological point of view.

There are two fragments of the *Refutatio Procli* attributed to Procopius. They have both been copied in MSS Vat. gr. 1096 and Vat. gr. 604 by one and the same book-hand, that of the prolific Byzantine scribe and scholar Isaak Argyros. In particular chapter 146 of the *Refutatio* is found in MS Vat. gr. 1096 at f. $52r_{12}$–$52v_{18}$ and at f. 61r of the same manuscript. As to chapter 139, it is found in MS Vat. gr. 1096 at f. $108r_{15–27}$, and in MS Vat. gr. 604 f. $46r_{1–9}$ *ab imo*. These chapters of the *Refutatio Procli* have been edited as authentic Procopian fragments by Amato (ch. 139 = fr. VIII.1; ch. 146 = fr. VIII.2),[99] who concluded on this basis that the *Refutatio Procli* was originally composed by Procopius of Gaza and later re-elaborated by Nicholas of Methone in the twelfth century. According to this view, the fragments in MSS Vat. gr. 1096 and Vat. gr. 604 are the only existing witnesses to the Procopian *Refutatio Procli*.

However, in its present state the *Refutatio* includes numerous features inconsistent with Procopius.[100] In this regard, if we were to retain Amato's view,

98 Golitsis 2014, p. 43–50.

99 Cf. *supra* p. 95–97.

100 Cf. *supra* p. 102–116.

we must accept a paradox: the *Refutatio* is a twelfth-century work in all its parts with the exception of chapters 139 and 146, where the text is entirely Procopian.[101] As said above, this conclusion invites more problems than it solves. Let us now add a few remarks concerning the textual aspects of the fragments of the *Refutatio Procli* attributed to Procopius in the *Vaticani* manuscripts. The first observation concerns the state of the fragments in the Vatican manuscripts, in particular the fact that they have all been copied by a single scribe. Amato's view on the origin of the fragments would be more compelling had the fragments been copied by two or more scribes independently from each other. However, this is not the case, for the scribe in our case is one and the same. It is pretty obvious that, being convinced of the Procopian authorship of the fragments, the scribe reproduced the same attribution whenever he copied the two texts. But Amato believes he can avoid this inconvenience on the basis of the state of the fragments in the manuscripts. In fact, the text of the fragments has been copied more than once in the *Vaticani* manuscripts, and the different redactions occasionally show some variant readings. From this Amato concludes that the scribe had at his disposal two different redactions both attributing the text (evidently independently from each other) to Procopius.[102]

This argument, however, becomes less compelling once we take into account the *modus operandi* of the scribe, who is known for introducing his own corrections *in scribendo*.[103] Thus the variant readings present in the different redactions of the fragments may not indicate the existence of more than one tradition of the same text. More importantly, a close inspection of Amato's extensive list of variant readings,[104] suggests that many are mere misreadings by the editor.[105] For example, it is not true that chapter 139 as transmitted in MS Vat. gr. 604 at f. 46r does not read καί before λέγοιτο. The καί is perfectly read in the usual abbreviated form. Vat. gr. 604 f. 46r and Vat. gr. 1096 f. 108r reads κυριότατα instead of Amato's κυριότατον.[106] MS Vat. gr. 1096 f. 108r (and not Vat. gr. 604, as Amato believes) reads τῶν μὴ κοινωνούντων instead of Amato's τῶν κοινωνούντων.[107] The absence of πνεύματος in the version of ch. 146 found in

101 Cf. *supra* p. 98.

102 See Amato 2010, p. 12.

103 Cf. *infra* p. 124–128.

104 Cf. Amato 2010, p. 11–12.

105 For example, at fr. VIII.2 l. 30 we read ἐπιστροφαῖς with manuscript Vat. gr. 1096 instead of Amato's ἐπιτροφαῖς.

106 The form κυριότατα is found in some of the manuscripts of the *Refutatio Procli* edited as Nicholas of Methone.

107 In any case one must follow MS Vat. gr. 604 f. 46r and the whole manuscript tradition of Nicholas of Methone's *Refutatio Procli* in reading τῶν οὐρανίων.

MS Vat. gr. 1096 f. 52r–v is a mere *lapsus* of the scribe. MS Vat. gr. 1096 f. 52r wrongly cites the fragment as ρνς′ instead of ρμς′, but Amato wrongly reads ρν′, just as he wrongly reads ρμ′ instead of ρμς′ in the redaction of chapter 146 in MS Vat. gr. 1096 at f. 61r.[108] In the same manuscript, at f. 108r, we read οὐδὲν οὔτε πρῶτως οὔτε κυρίως instead of οὐδὲν οὔτε πρῶτως καὶ κυρίως. The variant οὔτε should have been noted in the apparatus. The same holds true for fr. VIII.2, l. 35, where MS Vat. gr. 1096 f. 52v does not read καί and fr. VIII.2 l. 37, where MS Vat. gr. 1006 f. 61r does not read καί after καθά. Finally, Amato diligently noted the differences in the titles of the fragments in the *Vaticani* manuscripts, but did not realize that these are due to the fact that in MSS Vat. gr. 604 f. 46r and Vat. gr. 1096 f. 52r–v and 61r the fragments are parts of an anthology prepared by the scribe for the composition of future works, whereas in MS Vat. gr. 1096 f. 108r the fragments appear as a citation in a theological work.

In light of our analysis of the text, we believe that neither the number of the variant readings nor their type signifies the existence of more than one tradition or redaction of the fragments. The few discrepancies are mere corrections *in scribendo* or variants found in the manuscripts of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli*, and, therefore, their importance should not be overstated.

8 The Fragments: A Paleographer's View. The Anti-Palamite *florilegia* of *Vat. gr.* 1096 and the Two Extracts of Nicholas of Methone's *Refutatio Procli*

MS Vat. gr. 1096 is a composite volume consisting of 246 folios, plus an independent unit between folios 170 and 171 which formerly belonged to the earlier Vat. gr. 1892.[109] The manuscript contains seven codicological units which, with the exception of the last one (dating to the fifteenth century), are all linked to the activity of the Byzantine anti-Palamite circle close to the Kydones' brothers and Nikephoros' Gregoras' pupil Isaak Argyros.[110] The latter is a key figure in both the so-called "Palaiologan Renaissance" of the late fourteenth-century and in the theological controversies of the same period. In fact, Isaak shared the scientific interests of his master as well as his commitment to

108 The mistake has been corrected in the Teubner edition of the fragments.

109 On this unit see Mercati 1931, p. 230. For a description of the codex see also Polemis 2012, p. LXX–LXXX.

110 Cf. Rigo 1989.

refute the theological teachings of Gregory Palamas. Before clarifying the role played by Argyros in this codex, especially in regard to the two fragments from Nicholas of Methone's *Refutatio Procli* attributed to Procopius, we consider it worthwhile to offer a preliminary description of the units' content.

The first unit (f. 1–64) gathers numerous extracts from different Church Fathers, copied by at least eight different hands. Among these it is possible to distinguish one main scribe, A, to whom we can ascribe the entire copy of the collection of texts transmitted at f. 17r–58v. Although anonymous, this scribe is otherwise known from several other manuscripts linked to Isaak Argyros' anti-Palamite circle. The hand of this scribe is quite regular, proceeds with geometrically-shaped letters and angular strokes giving an aspect both stiff and forced. This is especially true for his formal handwriting, where he forgoes cursive in favor of sharp right angles. Typical of this scribe's handwriting are the shape of uppercase *beta*, lowercase *epsilon* in an ancient form (cut in half) and *phi* written with oval loop. Among ligatures the most characteristic is that of *tau-iota*, with the vowel lifting from the basic line and surmounted by dieresis.[111]

Afterwards, other hands added further implementations wherever they found empty spaces, such as blank pages, marginal *vacua* or half-empty sheets. These bookhands include Isaak Argyros, who contributed to the composition of this theological anthology, transcribing twice chapter 146 from Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli*. Isaak copied this text first at f. 52r–52v; then he copied it again at f. 61r. In both cases Argyros registered the title of the work from which he drew the fragments. Yet, he made a mistake at f. 52r as he reported the text as chapter 156, instead of chapter 146. At f. 52r we read: Προκοπίου Γάζης ἐκ τῶν εἰς τὰ θεολογικὰ κεφάλαια τοῦ Ἕλληνος Πρόκλου ἀντιρρήσεων, κεφαλαίου ρνς΄. Instead at f. 61r the same chapter, equally considered as stemming from Procopius' work, is numbered rightly as 146 in the title: f. 61r ἐκ τῶν εἰς τὰ τοῦ Πρόκλου θεολογικὰ κεφάλαια ἀντιρρήσεων Προκοπίου Γάζης ἀντίρρησις κεφαλαίου ρμς.[112]

The identification of Isaak Argyros' hand is due to Mercati, who in 1931 identified this book-hand in several Vatican manuscripts related to the Palamite

111 In Gioffreda 2020 the copyist here named as A has been recognized in the following manuscripts, all of which related to anti-Palamite circle: Laur. Plut. 56.14 (f. 1–163v); Vat. gr. 604 (f. 17r–47); Vat. gr. 678 (f. 63r–69v); Vat. gr. 1094 (f. 63v); Vat. gr. 1096 (f. 1r–8r, 9r–17v, 19r–20r, 21rv, 22v–23r, 26r–27r, 36v–40r, 53r–54v, 64r–64v). For a specimen see: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1096.

112 Cf. Mercati 1931, p. 265–266 and Bianconi 2008, p. 354.

controversy,[113] including the above-mentioned fragments as well as another fragment of the *Refutatio Procli* in MS Vat. gr. 604 (f. 39–47).[114]

As it is well known to specialists, Mercati has gained a definitive confirmation for his hypothetical identification thanks to a marginal note left by Argyros on f. 138v of Vat. gr. 176, a witness of Ptolemy's *Harmonica*.[115] The numerous scholia surrounding the main text in this manuscript must be assigned to Argyros' hand as well.[116] Argyros's note reads as follows: "This material has been revised not by the philosopher Gregoras, but rather by his pupil, the monk Isaak Argyros" (διωρθώσατο δὲ ταῦτα οὐχ ὁ φιλόσοφος Γρηγορᾶς ἀλλ' ὁ μαθητευθεὶς αὐτῷ Ἰσαὰκ μοναχὸς ὁ Ἀργυρός). This allowed Mercati to identify Argyros as the main scribe of the codex and as the author of several of its exegetical notes.

Let us present in short the characteristics of Argyros' book-hand.

8.1 *Argyros' Hand*

Argyros' handwriting is a small, regular and tidy hand, which slightly bends to the right, and is marked by the presence of angular strokes and vertical traits stretched over both the upper and lower writing lines.[117] In spite of its several abbreviations and tachygraph signs, Argyros' cursive handwriting still remains stylish and neat. In light of these features and because of the angular strokes peculiar to this handwriting, Argyros' book-hand has been associated with a

113 More recently after Mercati, who recognized Argyros' hand in Vat. gr. 604, Vat. gr. 1096, Vat. gr. 1102, Vat. gr. 1115, Vat. gr. 2335, other scholars have increased the attribution of Argyros in up to thirty manucripts. We indicate here for each attribution the scholars in brackets: Laur. Plut. 28.13 (Mondrain 2008), Laur. Plut. 89 sup. 48 (Bianconi 2008); Marc. gr. 155 (Bianconi 2008, Mondrain 2008), Marc. gr. 162 (Mondrain 2008), Marc. gr. 308 (Bianconi 2008, Mondrain 2008), Marc. gr. 310 (Bianconi 2008), Marc. gr. 323 (Bianconi 2008, Mondrain 2008); Neap. III D 37 (Bianconi 2008), Norimb. Cent. V App. 36, Norimb. Cent. V App. 37, Norimb. Cent. V App. 38 (Mondrain 2008, Murr 1930); Par. gr. 940 (Mondrain 2008), Par. gr. 1246, Par. gr. 1276 (Mondrain 2008, Pérez Martín 2008), Par. gr. 2507 (Mondrain 2008), Par. gr. 2758 (Mondrain 2008), Par. gr. 2821 (Bianconi 2008, Mondrain 2008); Parm. 154 (Bianconi 2008, Mondrain 2008); Prah. XXV. C. 31 (Mondrain 2008); Vat. Pal. gr. 174 (Menchelli 2014), Vat. gr. 81 (Bianconi 2008), Vat. gr. 1094 (Polemis 2012), Vat. gr. 1721 (Bianconi 2008). In addition, there are three new identifications, namely that of Esc. Y III 21, Vat. gr. 573 and Par. gr. 1672, for those see Gioffreda 2020.

114 See again Mercati 1931, p. 158–159, p. 259–265.

115 See Mercati 1931 and Laue, Makris 2002, p. 226–245.

116 This conjectural identification by Düring 1930, p. XXXIII was confirmed by Mercati 1931, p. 229, n. 6.

117 For a description of Argyros' hand see Bianconi 2008, p. 356, Mondrain 2008, p. 165–170, Pérez Martín 2008, p. 445–448 and Gioffreda 2020, p. 29–43.

current known as "geometrical". Interestingly, the book-hands belonging to this category are found in several fourteenth-century mathematical and scientific manuscripts.[118]

Furthermore, according to Bianconi and Pérez Martín, Argyros' script is based on two different models: on the one hand, the above-mentioned geometrical script; on the other, the individual writing of Argyros' teacher, Nikephoros Gregoras.[119] Typical of the latter model are the shapes of the bilobular *beta*, rare in "geometrical" handwriting, of the enlarged uppercase *kappa* and the frequent ligatures of *iota* and *tau*, with the latter marked by an angular track at the bottom. The influence of Gregoras' script is more evident in Argyros' cursive handwriting which is mostly used for copying scholia, marginal notes or *vacua* spaces. It is, by contrast, rarely used for copying main texts. In the latter case Argyros adopts a more regular script typical of the so-called τῶν Ὁδηγῶν style, although in a version less formal than expected. Typical of this script is the *zeta* in form of *two*, with angular tracts, and the uppercases delta and *lambda*. Both these handwritings coexist for example in f. 177r of ms. Neap. *III D 37*.

8.2 *Argyros and the* Refutatio Procli

As stated by Mercati long ago, the two extracts of the *Refutatio Procli* in Vat. gr. 1096 have clearly been copied by Isaak Argyros. On the basis of this identification we can go one step further in the attempt to clarify the reasons why Argyros copied these two fragments, as well as the manner in which he used and re-elaborated them for his own purposes. Before doing so, we shall briefly present the other fragment from Nicholas' *Refutatio* found at f. 46r of Vat. gr. 604.[120]

This codex is also composite and collects at the beginning two different theological anthologies. Just as in the case of MS Vat. gr. 1096, the two anthologies preserved in MS Vat. gr. 604 concern the fourteenth-century Palamite controversy.[121] The first collects passages concerning the nature of the Taboric light (f. 17–38), whereas the second contains a theological *florilegium* against the essence-energies distinction (f. 39–47). Both anthologies are copied in their main parts by the main copyist of the anthology transmitted in the first unit

118 For a description of these handwriting see Pérez Martín 2008, p. 440.

119 Descriptions of Argyros' hand can be found in Bianconi 2008, Pérez Martín 2008 and Mondrain 2008 and Gioffreda 2020.

120 Mercati 1931, p. 158–159, p. 259–265. For a reproduction of the manuscript see: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.604.

121 On this controversy, see Russell 2017.

of Vat. gr. 1096, namely scribe A, who copied f. 17r–58v with exception of the five annotations left by Argyros on f. 46r–47r.[122] Among these, we should focus on that one at f. 46r, l. 1–9, where Argyros transcribed chapter 139 of Nicholas' *Refutatio* under the name of Procopius of Gaza: φησὶ δὲ καὶ ὁ τοῖς Προκλικοῖς κεφαλαίοις ἀντιλέγων σοφὸς τὰ θεῖα Προκόπιος ὁ Γάζης ἐν ἀντιρρήσει κεφαλαίου ρλθ.

Before addressing the issue of the real motivation behind Argyros' exploitation of the *Refutatio Procli*, we shall briefly present other anthologies of the same kind copied under the same circumstance of those preserved in the two aforementioned Vatican manuscripts. In fact, we believe that Argyros' excerpting from the *Refutatio Procli* can only be understood when seen in the light of his commitment against the Palamite theology.

8.2.1 Other Anti-Palamite Anthologies

The production of dogmatic anthologies containing extracts from different works seems to be one of the most important prerogatives of the figures known for taking part in the Palamite controversy. These collections often occupy one or two units of a manuscript and gather extracts from the earlier synodal tomes, especially those of 1341 and 1351, passages from the Church Fathers and from later authors, and finally passages derived from the opponents' works. Sometimes they are found as organized in topics and introduced by *pinakes* that illustrate their content. In all likelihood the composition of these anthologies had several purposes, such as facilitating the research of crucial and useful quotations, making authoritative sources available to those who wished to write their own works, making available to authors an appropriate procedure for drafting of new texts and for producing new anthologies. In the Palamite controversy both sides resorted to such a literary product.

Thanks to Antonio Rigo's important studies we know of several of these theological anthologies composed by both pro-Palamite theologians and by their opponents.[123] We have already mentioned those contained in *Vatt. grr.* 604 and 1096 copied, among others, by scribe A and by Isaak Argyros. Both textual and paleographical evidence allow us to relate to the same *milieu* the anthologies transmitted in the following manuscripts: Marc. gr. 162 (f. 1r–103v), Vat. gr. 678 (f. 62–103v) and Vall. F. 30 (f. 2r–297v).

Let us provide a few remarks on these anthologies, on the way they were produced and on their use by the theologians involved in the controversy.

122 Russell 2017, p. 264–265.

123 Rigo 1989, p. 135–149.

8.2.1.1 *MS Vat. gr. 678*

MS Vat. gr. 678 preserves at f. 62r–103v a *florilegium* consisting of various excerpts and divided into three sections: the first one (f. 62v–86v) is divided into twelve chapters and transmits among other texts the profession of faith of the Byzantine Thomist and anti-Palamite Prochoros Kydones;[124] the second one (f. 87r–96v) is composed of nine chapters; the last (f. 96v–103v) preserves various extracts from Gregory Palamas' works under the title: Τοῦ Παλαμᾶ ἀπὸ τοῦ περὶ φωτὸς λόγου αὐτοῦ. Four different book-hands collaborated in these folios. All of them are copyists involved in the production of several manuscripts belonging to Isaak Argyros' circle.[125] For example, f. 63r–69r have been copied by the previously-mentioned Scribe A, while Argyros left three autograph annotations on the much-debated episode of Christ's transfiguration on Mount Tabor (Mt. 17.1–8 *et passim*):[126] an excerpt from Leontius of Byzantium's *Homelia in Trasfigurationem* on f. 86v, wrongly transmitted as John Chrysostom; two unknown passages at f. 103v on the light seen by the disciples on Mount Tabor;[127] and finally, in the margins of f. 101v–102r, a passage from Anastasius Sinaita's *Homelia in Trasfigurationem*.[128]

8.2.1.2 *MS Marc. gr. 162*

The first unit of this fourteenth-century manuscript transmits an anti-Palamite *florilegium* in 64 chapters (f. 1r–103v) and Argyros' treatise *De paternitate et filiatione dei* (104r–116v), both copied by an anonymous but prolific scribe, whose career has been related to Nikephoros Gregoras and his circle.[129] The second unit preserves one of John Kyparissiotes' work, *Utrum proprietates personales in Trinitate ab essentia differant* (f. 117r–125v) copied by the hand of John Dukas Malakes.[130] In the marginal spaces of this second unit Argyros left two different annotations, at f. 117r and f. 118v.[131] In light of this we can safely assume that Argyros supervised the copy not only of this unit, but also of the first unit

124 On *PLP*, no. 13883.

125 On this manuscript Cf. *Codices Vaticani Graeci III*, p. 132–136, and Mercati 1931, p. 248–251, and Bianconi 2008, p. 362–365.

126 Among others, we detected the following book-hands: Anonymous ξ at f. 62r, 69v–72v, 76v–86r, 87r–96v, Anonymous ερ at f. 97r–101v, and finally at f. 73r–76r a well-known copyist named John Dukas Malakes. On the latter, see Gioffreda 2020, p. 140–141.

127 The first one occupying the lines 1–14 of f. 103v, *inc.*: τοίνυν ἐν πάσαις, *des.*: ὑπολαμβάνειν καὶ λέγειν; the second one at l. 15–28, *inc.*: καὶ αὐτὴ δ᾽ ἡ σημασία, *des.*: εἰπεῖν τολμήσειεν ἄν.

128 Cf. Guillou 1995, p. 239, l. 6–5, *inc.*: σήμερον γὰρ ἀληθῶν, *des.*: κατάστασις.

129 See Bianconi 2015, p. 261, n. 126, also for the bibliography.

130 Cf. Gioffreda 2020, p. 51, 62, 248. On Kyparissiotes cf. *PLP* 13900.

131 See Mondrain 2008, p. 168.

containing the anti-Palamite *florilegium*, from which he derived excerpts from Isaac of Nineveh, Evagrius Ponticus and Diadocus of Photice.[132]

8.2.1.3 *MS Vallicellianus F 30*

MS Vallicellianus F. 30 transmits at f. 2r–297v a rich anti-palamite *florilegium* to be dated on the basis of a paleographical analysis to the fourteenth century, not to the fifteenth century as proposed by Martini's outdated catalogue of the Greek manuscripts preserved in Italy.[133] The *florilegium* is divided into several chapters and has been mostly copied by two principal scribes, although later hands are present as well. The two main scribes display scholarly hands proper to the book-hands of this century.

This composition is based on the same Patristic and post-Patristic sources employed in the previous collections. It must be noted that in the margins of some of the fragments there are notes concerning the sources and books from which the passages were drawn. Among these, one of the scribes refers to the books of John Dukas Malakes. It is no coincidence that this name occurs also in the margins of Vat. gr. 604, where scribe A noted that the passage from Cyril of Alexandria on Luke's Gospel on the divine transfiguration (Luke 9.28–36) is taken "from Doukas' book" (ἐκ τοῦ βιβλίου ὅπερ καὶ ὁ Δούκας ἔχει).[134] From this fact we can infer that in the *milieu* involved in the composition of anti-Palamite *florilegia* the same books circulated and that different copyists worked on the same source materials.

As Stiglmayr has shown, both *florilegia* in MS Vat. gr. 1096 and in MS Vallicellianus F 30 are very similar both with regard to their structure and content.[135] Interestingly, in many instances MS Vallicellianus F 30 transmits several scholia and excerpts with no indication of the authorship.[136]

8.3 *The Drafting of Argyros'* Adversus Cantacuzenum

The case of Isaak Argyros' *Adversus Cantacuzenum* (Argyros' work containing the excerpts from the *Refutatio Procli* ascribed to Procopius) offers a sample of the re-using of Patristic quotations by the individuals involved in the hesychast controversy. The work is addressed to John VI Kantakouzenos, a fervent defender of Gregory Palamas' teachings who served as Grand Domestikos

132 See Rigo 2012, p. 101–103.

133 See Martini 1902, p. 156–157.

134 On the annotations see Mercati 1931, p. 260, 263–265, Rigo 1987–1989, p. 126–129 and Bianconi 2008, p. 364, n. 82.

135 Stiglmayr 1989, p. 263–301, 300–301.

136 Stiglmayr 1989, p. 300–301.

under emperor Andronikos III Palaiologos (1328–1341), as regent for John V Palaiologos (emperor from 1341) and as emperor between 1347–1354.[137]

We shall now provide some arguments that refute once and for all the attribution of the *Adversus Cantacuzenum* to Johannes Kyparissiotes, as suggested by the editor of the text, Ioannis Polemis, against the earlier views by Mercati and Rigo, who rightly attributed the text to Isaak Argyros.[138] Mercati noticed that the *Adversus Cantacuzenum* contains several passages found in other treatises of the same Argyros. For example, in chapter 21, l. 8–57 of *Adversus Cantacuzenum* (cfr. ed. Polemis 2012, p. 73–75) one can find the very same profession of faith written by Argyros in his letter addressed to Gedeon.[139] Further textual concordances found by Mercati include the citations of the excerpts from Gregory of Nazianzus' *Oratio XXIX* and *Oratio XIX* found in *Adversus Cantacuzenum*. The former figures in the introduction to Argyros' Περὶ τοῦ μετοχῆς, whereas both are found in the conclusion of *Adversus Cantacuzenum*. The latter was copied by Argyros at the beginning of *Tomus Anthiochenus* in Vat. gr. 2335[140] and then employed at the very beginning of *Adversus Cantacuzenum*.[141] In addition, Rigo proved the relationship between the *Adversus Cantacuzenum* and the anti-palamite *florilegium* contained in Marc. gr. 162, a manuscript that Argyros knew well, as demonstrated by the presence of his book-hands in this manuscript. Finally, Rigo pointed out that chapters 255–257 of *Adversus Cantacuzenum* include the same passages from Isaac of Nineveh, Evagrius Ponticus and Diadocus of Photice available on f. 55r–57v of this anti-Palamite florilegium.[142]

Whereas the attribution of *Adversus Cantacuzenus* to Argyros appears certain beyond doubt, it is in our view important to describe the way Argyros re-elaborated and re-used the source-material available to him. In particular we would like to point out the strong connection between the previously-mentioned florilegia and Argyros' own works. For example, chapters 156–158 of *Adversus Cantacuzenum* are built around the extracts copied by Argyros at f. 46r–47r of the anthology transmitted in Vat. gr. 604. As mentioned above, at l. 6–8 of f. 46r Argyros copied the text of chapter 139 of the *Refutatio Procli* which he then used in chapter 158 of the *Adversus Cantacuzenum*, where it is

137 See *PLP* 10973.

138 Cf. Mercati 1931, p. 239–241, Polemis 2012, p. LIII–LXI and Rigo 2012, p. 100–103.

139 Cf. Candal 1957, p. 100.10–102.25.

140 About this Tomus see Mercati 1931, p. 209–218, 240–242 and Polemis 1993.

141 Cf. Mercati 1931, p. 231–242, 270–278, and Polemis 2012, p. 73–75.

142 Rigo 2012.

ascribed to Procopius: ὁ τοῖς τοῦ Ἕλληνος Πρόκλου κεφαλαίοις ἀντιλέγων σοφὸς τὰ θεῖα Προκόπιος ὁ Γάζης ἐν ἀντιρρήσει καφαλαίου ἑνάτου καὶ τριακοστοῦ καὶ ἑκατοστοῦ.[143]

In other words, we believe that while investigating the cause for the wrong attribution to Procopius of chapters 139 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli*, one must take into account the different authorial practices adopted by the scribe. Argyros first copied the excerpts from the *Refutatio Procli* in a *florilegium* which he prepared for the composition of his own works. He then reproduced the same text in a newly-composed work, in our case the *Adversus Cantacuzenum*. This neatly explains the variant readings in MS Vat. gr. 1096 and in Vat. gr. 604. Whereas Amato thinks that these variants are witnesses to two traditions or redactions of the text,[144] we are convinced that these few variant readings must be explained on the basis of Argyros' way of excerpting and copying the material. In fact, as shown extensively by Gioffreda, when copying a text Argyros was accustomed to add frequent corrections *in scribendo*.[145] To modern scholars unfamiliar with Argyros' *modus operandi*, these corrections may be misunderstood as variant readings that hark back to other traditions or redactions of the text. However, research shows that in several manuscripts copied by Argyros this is not the case. The fragments copied in MSS Vat. gr. 1096 and Vat. gr. 604 could be among the many instances in which this tendency is more evident.

In other words, it is pretty clear that the chapters of the *Refutatio Procli* attributed to Procopius in MS Vat. gr. 1096 and Vat. gr. 604 have been copied according to different authorial practices. The extracts from the *Refutatio Procli* have been first copied as drafts for Argyros' private use and then they have been published in a theological work such as the *Adversus Cantacuzenum*. Like many of his contemporaries, Argyros first prepared a provisional draft and then an official published version of all source material. Accordingly, the various sources undergo a process of transformation from drafts into texts ready for publication. While selecting and publishing, the various excerpts are subject to revision, which explains the existence of a few variant readings between the different versions of the same text.

In sum, Argyros' excerpts from the *Refutatio Procli* attributed to Proclus as found in the aforementioned *florilegia* and in Argyros' theological pamphlet *Adversus Cantacuzenum* do not reflect two different traditions of the same text, but rather two different stages of the same editorial procedure: from the selection of the material to its final publication. In the same way the excerpts

143 Cf. ed. Polemis 2012, p. 191, cap. 158, l. 1–2.

144 Cf. Amato 2010, 12.

145 Gioffreda 2020, p. 90–95.

copied by Argyros in another manuscript, Vat. gr. 678, were reused in his own writings.[146] As Bianconi already noted, Argyros used the extract from Anastasius Sinaita's *Homelia in Trasfigurationem*, copied by himself in the margins of f. 101v–102r, in a short version of his *Contra Dexium*.[147] This very same excerpt has been included by Argyros as chapter 38 of *Adversus Cantacuzenum*.

But what is the rationale behind Argyros' citations of patristic and post-patristic authorities in *Adversus Cantacuzenum* and in his other theological writings? As anticipated above, Argyros was a fervent anti-Palamite and a fierce opponent of the very core of the Palamite theology, namely the distinction between God's essence and his providential energies through which the divine economy is displayed.[148] Understandably, in selecting his sources he favored those theological passages which in his view stressed God's substantial unity. This is precisely what he did when excerpting chapters 139 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli*. A close inspection of these passages shows that both emphasize—from different point of view—the divine unity. Chapter 139 addresses Proclus' polytheism and his admission of a series of other entities through which causality occurs. Against this, chapter 139 remarks that God is the only cause of the universe. Chapter 146 starts with the citation from Gregory of Nazianzus (*Oratio* 29.2, *PG* 36, 76B) on the nature of the intratrinitarian procession as the only case of procession where the cause and the effects remain one. This text went, according to Argyros, in the direction of defending God's substantial unity within the process of causation. Argyros' exploitation of these two fragments from the *Refutatio Procli* is therefore consistent with one of the main arguments brought forth by Argyros' master, Nikephoros Gregoras, namely that separating God's substance and his energies would admit a form of Neoplatonic polytheism.[149] Taking a cue from Nicholas' critique of Proclus' polytheism, Argyros believes he can adapt Nicholas' refutation to his own critique of Palamas' distinction between God's substance and his providential energies, as if this latter view introduces entities other than God as responsible for the causation process.

At the end of this excursus on Argyros' *modus operandi*, we can infer that in all probability the attribution to Procopius of chapters 139 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli* found in the Vatican manuscripts originated in the fourteenth

146 Cf. *supra* p. 125

147 See Candal 1957, p. 106, l. 21–108, l. 3, Bianconi 2008, p. 363–364 and Polemis 2012, p. 90–91, cap. 35, l. 2–16.

148 See Russell 2017.

149 Cf. Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, p. 481.5–483.11. We are grateful to Börje Bydén for alerting us to this passage.

century, at the time of the hesychast controversy. At this time, scholars involved in the controversy, such as Argyros, produced anthologies and *florilegia* containing theological texts which could be used against opposing parties. Within this process, we believe that for reasons probably relating to a mechanical error, someone extracted the fragments of the *Refutatio Procli* and improperly ascribed it to Procopius. This is not unlikely if one takes into account the fact that in several of these anthologies, such as MS Vallicellianus F 30, the various excerpts are transmitted as anonymous, thus making it easier for a scribe to misattribute. Furthermore, as we will show in our conclusions, the tradition of Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* includes an acephalous version of the text, something which once again could possibly explain a later misattribution. In this regard, it is our intention to investigate more closely in the future the aforementioned fourteenth-century anti-Palamite anthologies in order to detect further elements favoring this view.

9 Conclusions

Two fragments of the *Refutatio Procli*, a refutation of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, attributed in the manuscript tradition of the text to the twelfth-century learned bishop Nicholas of Methone, have been ascribed in two fourteenth-century manuscripts, copied by the byzantine scribe and scholar Isaak Argyros, to the late-ancient Christian rhetor and ecclesiastical writer Procopius of Gaza. On this basis, from the late nineteenth-century until recent years Procopius scholars have blindly accepted Argyros' attribution of the fragments to Procopius and, accordingly, have argued that Nicholas has re-elaborated and even plagiarized a now lost *Refutatio Procli* by Procopius, of which the two aforementioned fragments are the last surviving traces.

In this paper we provide a complete and balanced account by comparing for the first time historical, philological and paleographical data. An unbiased analysis of the extant data suggests that the attribution to Procopius of the two fragments is probably wrong and, therefore, it is highly improbable that Procopius of Gaza ever authored a *Refutation* of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*. One reasonable explanation for a scribal mistake has already been brought forth by Mercati and more recently by Bianconi. According to these scholars, Argyros probably had at his disposal a *codex* in which the *Refutatio Procli* was either wrongly attributed to Procopius or was transmitted as anepigraphic and anonymous together with a Procopian text. The only advantage of this solution is that such a *codex* exists and, more importantly, it surely circulated in the circle of Argyros and his collaborators, as demonstrated by the presence of

the book-hand of one of Argyros' fellows.[150] The MS in question is Vat. gr. 626, a codex copied at the beginning of fourteenth-century and divided into two units preserving Theodoret of Cyrrhus' *Graecarum affectionum curatio* (f. 1–120) and Nicholas' *Refutatio Procli* (f. 121–212), respectively. The attribution of the *Refutatio* to Nicholas at f. 121 is due to a later hand, thus suggesting that an anepigraphic copy of the *Refutatio Procli* circulated among Argyros and his collaborators. At the present stage of research it is not possible to ascertain whether this circumstance alone explains Argyros' attribution to Procopius of chapters 139 and 146 of the *Refutatio Procli*, or whether Argyros inherited this attribution from a hitherto unknown *florilegium* which he used as a source. We can only suggest that the attribution to Procopius of the fragments in question must be taken with the greatest caution and that, in absence of new incontrovertible evidence, this attribution must be regarded as highly dubious.

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150 Bianconi 2008, p. 354.

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PART 2

The Caucasus

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CHAPTER 6

Die *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos im Kontext der kaukasischen Philosophie

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1 Fragestellung: Das Konzept der kaukasischen Philosophie

Im Kontext der interkulturellen Philosophie besitzen die Erforschung und Analyse der transnationalen philosophischen Diskurse eine eminente Bedeutung. Aus dieser Perspektive erweist sich daher der Versuch, die Konturen der *kaukasischen Philosophie* zu entwerfen, als wichtig. Die methodologischen Voraussetzungen und Grundlagen einer derartigen Philosophie habe ich bereits in meinen Studien näher vorgestellt.[1] Dort nehme ich erstmals die „kaukasische Philosophie" als ein Ganzes in den Blick, indem ich vor allem diejenigen Denker aus dieser Region berücksichtige, die produktive philosophische Beziehungen zwischen Armenien und Georgien initiiert haben.[2]

Als „kaukasische Philosophie" gilt dabei jenes philosophische Denken der Hochkulturen des Kaukasus, das zunächst im Ausgang von spätantiken und byzantinischen Anregungen, dann aber unter dem Einfluss anderer Strömungen zu einer eigenständigen philosophischen Tradition heranwuchs, die sich bis in die Gegenwart durch Originalität, Produktivität und Weitblick auszeichnet.[3]

Im Kontext der *kaukasischen Philosophie* erhält die *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos eine wichtige Stellung. In Bezug auf dieses Werk wurden in

1 Vgl. Iremadze 2013; Iremadze 2014a.

2 Udo Reinhold Jeck spricht in seinen bahnbrechenden Studien *Platonica Orientalia* (2004) und *Erläuterungen zur georgischen Philosophie* (2010) über eine neue Bestimmung der westlichen Philosophie innerhalb der globalen Konstellation des philosophischen Denkens. Besonders in seinen *Erläuterungen zur georgischen Philosophie* hat er auf die Wichtigkeit eines Umdenkens des westeuropäischen Philosophiebegriffs hingewiesen. Der in den Philosophiegeschichten stark verbreitete und vertretene Eurozentrismus, der sich auf die Hochkulturen des Westens bezog, hat die Erforschung vieler früher unbekannten Traditionen der Philosophie wesentlich behindert. Dazu zählen vor allem zahlreiche europäische und besonders außereuropäische Philosophien. Vgl. Jeck, ^{2}2012, p. 9–10.

3 Vgl. Iremadze 2013, p. 7–14, 138; Iremadze 2014a, p. 7–35.

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dieser Region auch die Rolle, Mission sowie der Zweck des Philosophierens oft bestimmt.[4]

Um das oben Gesagte zu verdeutlichen, werde ich in meinem Aufsatz folgendermaßen verfahren: Zunächst lasse ich Joane Petrizis Übersetzung und Auslegung der *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos zu Wort kommen. Erst dann versuche ich zu zeigen, wie die Proklos-Rezeption in der kaukasischen Region entwickelt wurde. Hierin sollen verschiedenartige Proklos-Deutungen in der kaukasischen (georgischen und armenischen) Philosophie des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit zur Sprache kommen. Daraus wird ersichtlich, daß die *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos in der Philosophie der Kaukasier eine wichtige Rolle gespielt hat.

2 Joane Petrizis Übersetzung und Auslegung der *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos

Der erste georgische Kommentator des Proklos, Joane Petrizi (12. Jh.), wollte die griechische Philosophie in Gestalt des Proklischen Denkens in Georgien bekannt machen und die Lehre der Platoniker darstellen.[5]

Petrizi meinte, daß man auf der Basis der platonischen Philosophie das christliche Weltbild am besten begründen könne.[6] Deshalb übersetzte er Schriften des Nemesios von Emesa[7] und des Proklos[8] ins Altgeorgische. Im folgenden sollen Petrizis Methode des Kommentierens und ihre wichtigsten strukturellen Aspekte zur Sprache kommen. Dabei wird es notwendig sein, von inhaltlichen Problemen weitgehend abzusehen und vielmehr das spezifische Verfahren der Exegese darzustellen.

Petrizis Kommentar zur *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos besteht aus einer *Einleitung* und aus den *Erläuterungen* zu jedem Kapitel dieses Werkes. In der Edition von Petrizis *Proklos-Kommentar* durch Sch. Nuzubidse und S. Kauchtschischvili folgt diesen *Erläuterungen* ein *Nachwort*.

In den *Einleitungen* stellten die Kommentatoren fast immer die Frage nach der Intention des zu kommentierenden Werkes, der *vita auctoris*, dem Titel und der Form. Der Kommentar (und entsprechend die *Einleitung*) entwickelte sich stets weiter, denn es wurden immer neue Formen (Verfahren) des Kommentie-

4 Vgl. Iremadze 2007, p. 66–78.
5 Vgl. Iremadze 2009, p. 285–286.
6 Vgl. Iremadze, 2004a.
7 Vgl. Nemesios von Emesa 1914.
8 Joane Petrizi 1940; Joane Petrizi 1937.

rens erprobt. Trotzdem blieben die in ihm zu behandelnden Probleme gleichartig. Der spätmittelalterliche Kommentar erhielt eine einheitlichere Form, die Methoden änderten sich jedoch, denn an die Stelle des relativ einfachen *accessus* trat die *Vier-Ursachen-Einleitung*. Schließlich ging es darum, in einer *Einführung* mit möglichst angemessenen Methoden die o. g. Fragen an den kommentierten Text zu beantworten.

Joane Petrizis *Einleitung* zur *Elementatio theologica* geht auf alle diese Fragen ein. Er betrachtet den Sinn (die *intentio*) dieses Buches und sieht ihn darin, ‚das vielbesprochene Eine' zu beweisen.[9] Dann behandelt er kurz die Besonderheit des Einen, das nach seiner Ansicht mit keinem Seienden identisch ist. Das reine und echte Eine müsse gemäß den Regeln der Syllogismen untersucht und bewiesen werden.[10] Dieses Eine ist nach Petrizis Exegese der entscheidende Begriff im ganzen Begründungsprozeß des Wissens. Ohne die Beweisbarkeit dieses Prinzips gibt es keine unwiderlegbaren Sätze, und das gnoseologische Ziel bleibt unerreicht. Das Eine ist das Prinzip, das Wissen überhaupt erst ermöglicht.

Nachdem Petrizi die *intentio* des Proklischen Werkes herausgestellt hat, behandelt er den Titel dieses Traktats und die Biographie des Proklos. Zuerst nennt er den vollständigen Titel: *Die Elementatio theologica des platonischen Philosophen Proklos Diadochos*.[11] Dann beginnt er sofort mit der Darstellung des Lebenslaufs des Proklos, indem er ihn und seine Tätigkeit als Lehrer lobt: Er habe das Eine zu erfassen versucht. Den verborgenen Sinn der Platonischen Dialoge habe er ebenso erschlossen und zu ihnen auch Kommentare geschrieben. Wegen dieser Verdienste habe er den Namen *Diadochos* (der Nachfolger) des Platon erhalten. Noch eine weitere große Leistung stamme von ihm: Proklos habe die Lehre der Peripatetiker, d. h. der Anhänger des Aristoteles, widerlegt.[12]

Petrizi unterscheidet in seiner *Einleitung* zwischen der Kraft und der Wirkung der Seele wie der Vernunft (Intellekt). Die seelische Erkenntnis wird als *Dianoia*, die vernünftige (intellektuale) aber als *Noesis* bezeichnet. Der oberste Gegenstand der Erkenntnis ist das *Noeton*. Nach dieser Bestimmung erklärt Petrizi jeden Begriff und führt klare Distinktionen zwischen ihnen ein. Die Wirkung der seelischen Erkenntniskraft bestehe in dem ‚Hinundher-Denken', das dem schrittweisen Vorwärtsgehen gleiche. Im Gegensatz dazu sei die Vernunft die stetige Erkenntnis, ihre Wirkung entstehe zusammen mit ihrem Wesen, und

9 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 149.
10 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 3.
11 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 4.
12 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 150.

ihr Wesen existiere immer zusammen mit ihrer Wirkung. Der Gegenstand der Vernunft und die Vernunft selbst existierten gleichzeitig und zusammen.[13]

Bei der Erklärung und Charakteristik der seelischen Erkenntniskraft führt Petrizi ein Zitat aus der Schrift des Porphyrios[14] an: „Das Hinundher-Denken der Seele ist dem Schreiten des Menschen ähnlich: Der geht nicht einfach hin, wohin er geht, sondern er vervollkommnet allmählich Schritt für Schritt seinen Weg."[15]

Petrizi stellt die Frage nach dem Verhältnis des Gegenstandes der Erkenntnis zum Erkennenden. Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis übertrifft immer den Erkennenden. Dabei bringt er die Aristotelische These ins Spiel, daß das Erste im Bewußtsein des Erkennenden von Natur aus das Letzte, das Letzte im Erkenntnisprozeß das Erste von Natur aus ist.[16] Die Kraft und Wirkung der Seele sei zusammengesetzt. Demgemäß sei ihr Wesen nicht einfach. Einfach sei vielmehr die Wirkung der Vernunft, und dementsprechend sei auch ihr eigenes Wesen einfach.[17]

Die Seele hat in der Potenz (in der Möglichkeit) die Aktivität (das Erkennen), sie erkennt in der fortschreitenden und hinzufügenden Weise oder bleibt immer in reiner Möglichkeit als die bloße Kraft, wie die Seelen der Nichtphilosophen – so Petrizi unter Berufung auf Aristoteles – nicht verwirklicht sind. Die Wirkung der Seele und der Vernunft wird den Philosophierenden zugeschrieben.[18] Die Vernunft bleibt der ewige (ununterbrochene) Erkenntnisprozeß. Ihr Wesen besteht im Erkennen; sie versteht und erkennt alles auf singuläre Weise und das Viele vielfältig. Wenn wir uns hier an Petrizis These erinnern, daß jeder Erkennende gemäß seinem Wesen wirkt, dann kann man die aktive Kraft der Vernunft aus den Kommentaren Petrizis eruieren. Das Eine selbst braucht keine Erkenntnis, weil diese immer mit dem Nicht-Wissen verbunden ist. Das Eine aber ist der Ursprung des Wissens und der Vernunft.

In seiner *Einleitung* unterstreicht Petrizi die pädagogische (wahrscheinlich auch didaktische) Bedeutung der *Elementatio theologica* (und seines Kommentars dazu). Derartige Bücher erfordern nach seiner Auffassung für das Verständnis ihrer Bedeutung eine sorgfältige Lektüre. Sokrates habe genauso gelesen wie die Kinder, denn immer habe er auf das Gelesene zurückgegriffen. Um den

13 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 6–8.
14 G. Tevzadze ist der Ansicht, daß sich Petrizi auf Porphyrios' Werk *Sententiae ad intelligibilia ducentes* bezieht; vgl. Vgl. Iremadze, 2004a, p. 54.
15 Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 152.
16 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 8.
17 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 8.
18 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 9.

wahren Sinn zu begreifen, seien auch beim Schreiben und Sprechen die Interpunktionszeichen zu beachten.

Diese Fragen stellt und behandelt Petrizi in seinem *Vorwort* (Einleitung). Dann folgt der eigentliche Kommentar zu jedem einzelnen Kapitel der *Elementatio theologica*. Petrizis Intention ist es gewesen, für die Leser die schwierigen Gedanken des Proklos möglichst verständlich zu machen. Dieser Kommentar besitzt folgende Struktur: Am Beginn steht die Lehrmeinung des Proklos aus dem entsprechenden Kapitel der *Elementatio theologica*. Erst dann folgt sein eigener Kommentar. Petrizi hat dabei alle ihm vorgegebenen 211 Kapitel des Proklos ausgelegt und sich in seinen Kommentaren über die wichtigsten Probleme der antiken Philosophie geäußert.[19] Mit besonderer Sorgfalt behandelt er die komplizierten Kapitel. Das Problem des Verhältnisses des Einen zum Vielen nimmt dabei viel Platz ein. Auch die Fragen nach der Ursache und Wirkung, der Zeit, dem Seienden, dem Guten und Bösen, den Göttern, dem Ganzen und dem Teil nehmen einen breiten Raum ein. Die Vernunftlehre (*Nous*-Lehre) des Proklos ist vor allem in Petrizis *Auslegung*, Kapitel 160–183, erläutert.

Petrizi ist sich aber bewußt gewesen, daß die von Proklos streng und kurz formulierten Sätze manchmal keine Möglichkeiten zur Umformulierung zulassen. Deswegen bringt er oft eigene Beispiele, um Proklische Gedanken für den Leser klar und in erkennbarer Form darzustellen. Petrizis Umgang mit den Lesern ist hilfreich, denn er spricht sie mit großer Freundlichkeit an: „Hör zu, oh Lehrling, der (Du) geistig erkennst."[20] Diese Anredeform findet man in der *Auslegung* sehr oft, was darauf hindeutet, daß Petrizis Kommentare zu Vorlesungszwecken geschrieben worden sind. Sein Kommentar ist ein Dialog mit den Lesern in Gestalt eines Monologs. Wahrscheinlich hat Petrizi die in seinem Kommentar erklärten Themen im Gelati-Kloster (bei Kutaisi) vorgetragen und diskutiert.

Eine der wichtigsten Fragen, die bei der Prüfung der Kommentare auftaucht, ist das Problem der Quellen Petrizis. Petrizi, der sich sehr gut in der griechischen Philosophie auskannte, hielt es oft nicht für nötig, seine Zitate genau nachzuweisen und die zitierten Werke exakt anzugeben. Vielleicht besaß er ein gut vorbereitetes Publikum, so daß ihm die genaue Zitation nicht erforderlich schien. Aber genau dieser Mangel seiner Arbeitsweise bereitet dem heutigen Leser große Schwierigkeiten.

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19 In der altgeorgischen Übersetzung der *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos findet sich das Kapitel 129, das in den bis heute erhaltenen griechischen Handschriften dieses Werkes fehlt. In der altgeorgischen Übersetzung fehlt dagegen das Kapitel 149 des griechischen Textes; vgl. Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 143.

20 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 163.

Petrizi nennt selbst die Philosophen, mit denen er sich in seiner *Auslegung* beschäftigt hat: Orpheus, Parmenides, Zenon, Platon, Aristoteles, Alexander von Aphrodisias, Porphyrios und die Kirchenväter.[21] Besonders hat er die platonische Philosophie geschätzt. Zu ihren Vertretern gehören nach seiner Ansicht sowohl Platons Vorgänger (Orpheus, Pythagoras usw.) als auch die Neuplatoniker. Platon bezeichnet er als ‚den Philosophen des Tages'.[22] Wenn Petrizi über den ‚Philosophen' spricht, ist darunter Proklos zu verstehen. Dagegen war im lateinischen Mittelalter die Bezeichnung *philosophus* dem Aristoteles vorbehalten.

Von den Schriften Platons rekurriert Petrizi auf die Dialoge *Parmenides*, *Nomoi*, *Phaidros*, *Phaidon* und *Timaios*. Obwohl er sie nicht erwähnt, zitiert er auch den *Theaitetos* und das *Symposion*.[23] Petrizi nennt zudem verschiedene Werke des Aristoteles, aber nicht die in der Scholastik benutzten pseudoaristotelischen Schriften.[24] Seiner *Auslegung* läßt sich entnehmen, daß er außer der *Elementatio theologica* auch andere Schriften des Proklos gekannt (z. B. die Kommentare zum *Parmenides* und *Timaios* sowie die *Platonische Theologie*) und bei Bedarf für die Erläuterung der *Elementatio theologica* von ihnen Gebrauch gemacht hat (z. B. in den Kapiteln 41, 58 und 59).[25]

Wie schon erwähnt, befindet sich in der vorhandenen Edition von Petrizis *Proklos-Kommentar* ein *Nachwort*.[26] In diesem werden verschiedene Probleme und Fragen seiner Tätigkeit behandelt. Es bezieht sich hauptsächlich nicht auf die *Elementatio theologica*. Dieses *Nachwort* trägt keinen einheitlichen Charakter. In diesem Teil findet man auch Auszüge aus anderen Schriften des Philosophen. Eine in der georgischen Forschung weit verbreitete Gliederung dieses Textes besitzt folgende Struktur: 1) Erklärung des Hauptsinnes der *Psalmen* als Verweis auf die Dreieinigkeit. Die Fragen nach der Vorsehung, des Guten, der Wesenslosigkeit bzw. Seinslosigkeit des Bösen. 2) Die Probleme der Übersetzung (sowohl der biblischen als auch besonders der philosophischen Texte). 3)

21 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1940, XXVI–LII; Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 145.

22 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1940, XXVII. Petrizi erwähnt Dionysius Ps.-Areopagita nicht, dessen Werk schon in der georgischen Übersetzung des Ephrem Mzire vorlag; vgl. G. Tevzadze 1996, p. 196.

23 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 34; 84.

24 Die Frage nach den Autoren und Quellen der *Auslegung* benötigt eine gesonderte Untersuchung und gehört nicht zur Aufgabe der vorliegenden Studie. Einiges dazu ist bereits geleistet worden (vgl. L. Alexidse 1997, p. 148–168).

25 Petrizi nannte in seinem sog. *Nachwort* die Kommentare des Proklos zum *Timaios* und *Parmenides*; vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 209.

26 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1937, p. 207–227.

Fragmente aus dem Epitaphios des Gregor von Nazianz für Basilius den Großen. 4) Über die Sprichwörter Salomons (unvollendet).[27]

Wie oben erwähnt, behandelt Petrizi in seinem *Nachwort* auch Übersetzungsprobleme. Sie sind im Kontext der vorliegenden Untersuchung von Bedeutung, weil sie im engen Zusammenhang mit dem Problem des Kommentierens stehen.

Zwar entfaltete sich im Kloster Athoni und in anderen kulturellen Zentren Georgiens zu damaliger Zeit eine rege Übersetzungstätigkeit, auch galten Petrizis Zeitgenossen als gute Übersetzer und Kommentatoren, doch scheint Petrizi mit den vorliegenden Leistungen nicht zufrieden gewesen zu sein. Die damalige Übersetzungspraxis hat Petrizi wie folgt charakterisiert: „Bei uns ist es üblich, einfache und gewöhnliche (Texte) in die gewählte und geschmückte Sprache zu übersetzen."[28] Abweichend von dieser Praxis versuchte Petrizi, die komplizierten Gedanken des zu übersetzenden Textes einfach und seiner Sprache angemessen wiederzugeben. In erster Linie sei auf den Sinn des zu übersetzenden Textes zu achten (sei es, daß es ein Text der Philosophie, oder sei es, daß es ein Text aus einer davon verschiedenen Wissenschaft ist). Petrizi führt im *Nachwort* falsche Übersetzungsbeispiele von Bibelstellen an und korrigiert sie. Um eine falsche Interpretation zu vermeiden, so Petrizi, müsse man eine Sprache entwickeln, die einerseits die Gedankenwelt verständlich und präzise ausdrückt, andererseits aber literarisch reich ist. Die griechische Sprache habe dieses Niveau erreicht und könne daher dem Georgischen in diesem Sinne als Muster dienen.

Ein Kommentator des Proklos zu sein war auch im griechisch geprägten Kulturraum nicht leicht. Petrizi hat viele Schwierigkeiten gehabt. Er fand keine Unterstützung unter Griechen *und* Georgiern.[29] Selbst die Worte des Abschreibers der Kommentare Petrizis zeigen, wie riskant es war, sich mit der *Elementatio theologica* zu befassen.[30] Petrizi hat sich dennoch daran gewagt und eine Renaissance der Proklischen Philosophie (und damit der ganzen antiken Tradition) auf dem christlichen Boden Georgiens erreicht.

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27 Vgl. Iremadze, 2004a, p. 23–25.

28 Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 171.

29 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 171.

30 Vgl. Joane Petrizi 1995, p. 147: „Aufgrund dieses Buches war der dreimal verdammte Areios verdorben worden, und von demselben Buch haben die dreimal gebildeten [Männer] – die großen Weisen Dionysios, auch Gregorios und Basileios sowie die anderen den Titel des Theologen gewonnen. Dein Geist soll ganz rein im Verhältnis zu Gott sein. Du sollst nicht die von den hl. Vätern [festgesetzten] Grenzen überschreiten und in Versuchung kommen."

3 Die Rezeption der *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos in der kaukasischen Philosophie

Die Proklische Philosophie wurde auch im lateinischen Mittelalter produktiv rezipiert, etwa in den intellekttheoretischen Schriften Dietrichs von Freiberg, besonders aber im *Proklos-Kommentar* Bertholds von Moosburg.[31] Im Unterschied zu diesen Philosophen hat die Proklos-Rezeption Petrizis eine einflußreiche Wirkung gezeitigt. Während Dietrich von Freiberg nur sporadisch rezipiert und Berthold von Moosburg fast kaum berücksichtigt wurde, besaß Petrizis Philosophie dagegen eine signifikante Rezeptionsgeschichte.[32]

Petrizis *Proklos-Kommentar* mit seiner georgischen Übersetzung der *Elementatio theologica* hat nicht nur in der georgischen Philosophie und Kultur, sondern auch außerhalb Georgiens großen Einfluß ausgeübt. 1248 hat der armenische Mönch Svimeon Petrizis *Proklos-Werk* ins Armenische übersetzt und hiermit zur Verbreitung der Proklischen Philosophie dort wesentlich beigetragen. Im 17. Jh. setzten sich armenische Philosophen mit dem Proklischen Gedankengut intensiv auseinander und sprachen über die Aktualität des Proklos; 1651 hat der armenische Episkopus Svimeon (= Svimeon Dshughaezi) zum leichteren Verständnis der *Elementatio theologica* Kommentare zu ihr verfaßt. Als Vorlage seines Kommentars galt dabei die aus der georgischen Übersetzung Petrizis im 13. Jh. angefertigte armenische Übersetzung des Mönches Svimeon. 1757 sind diese Kommentare zusammen mit der armenischen Version der *Elementatio theologica* ins Georgische übersetzt worden; sie haben in der georgischen Kultur eine spürbare Wirkung hinterlassen. Im 18. Jh. gab es also in georgischer Sprache mindestens zwei verschiedene Kommentare zur *Elementatio theologica*. Es ist zu betonen, daß sich die Denker der georgischen Aufklärung des 17. und 18. Jh.s auf diese Überlieferungen unterschiedlich bezogen. Manche kritisierten die armenische Version angesichts ihres Inhalts scharf.[33] Eines steht jedoch fest: Die Proklische Philosophie wurde in der georgischen Neuzeit intensiv berücksichtigt und rezipiert. Hier seien drei wichtige Stationen in der neuzeitlichen georgischen Proklos/Petrizi-Rezeption genannt:

1) Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani (1658–1726) integriert in sein *Georgisches Wörterbuch*[34] zahlreiche Theoreme aus dem *Proklos-Werk* Petrizis. Bei der Definition und Erörterung der Erkenntnisproblematik verweist er auf die 20. Proposi-

31 Vgl. Jeck 2011, 112–170; Mojsisch 2002, p. 175–184.
32 Vgl. Iremadze 2004b, p. 237–253.
33 Vgl. Dedabrischwili 1974, p. 64.
34 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1991; Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1993.

tion der *Auslegung* und bestimmt die Vernunft als die einfache, körperlose Erkenntnis des Erkannten;[35] die diskursive Erkenntnis der Seele wird von ihm ebenfalls im Anschluß an Petrizi als sukzessiv, d. h., als eine in der Zeit entfaltete Erkenntnis bezeichnet. Auch andere wichtige Definitionen der Philosophie (z. B. die Bestimmung des Wirklichseienden[36], der Hervorbringung[37], der Kausalität[38], der Bewegung[39]) sind aus dem *Proklos-Kommentar* Petrizis übernommen. Wichtig ist jedoch, daß Orbeliani im Anschluß an Proklos und Petrizi – wenngleich in transformierter Weise – die Vernunft in drei Arten gliedert:

Die Vernunft als Gott / die Vernunft als Engel / unsere Vernunft.[40]

So ist Petrizis Philosophie als Grundlage für die Charakterisierung der Erkenntnisaktivität im Werk Sulchan-Saba Orbelianis zu deuten. Besonders bemerkenswert ist die Tatsache, daß dieser neuzeitliche Denker die damalige georgische Leserschaft auf die Aktualität der neuplatonischen Gedankenwelt aufmerksam machte, und dies im Rekurs auf Petrizis *Proklos-Kommentar*.

Ebenso intensiv bezog sich Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani in seinem *Georgischen Wörterbuch* auf Petrizis georgische Übersetzung der Schrift *Über die Natur des Menschen* des Nemesios von Emesa. Orbelianis Werk ist also ein sprechendes Beispiel dafür, wie stark Petrizis Philosophie das moderne georgische Denken geprägt hat.[41]

2) Anton I. (Bagrationi) (1720–1788)[42], Philosoph und Theologe, bezieht sich im dritten Teil (in dem er seine Seelenlehre entwickelt) seines philosophischen Werks *Spekali*[43] (1752) auf die *Auslegung* Petrizis und übernimmt von ihm nicht zuletzt die Unterscheidung zwischen Seele und Vernunft, indem er die Vernunft als eine der Seele überlegene Instanz betrachtet. Es ist bemerkenswert, daß Anton I. einige Kapitel, welche der Erkenntnisproblematik des Proklos gewidmet sind, Petrizis Werk fast wörtlich entlehnt hat.[44]

35 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1991, p. 166,1–2.
36 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1991, p. 574,1.
37 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1993, p. 366,2; p. 367,1.
38 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1991, p. 480,1–2.
39 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1991, p. 479,2.
40 Vgl. Sulchan-Saba Orbeliani 1991, p. 166,1.
41 Vgl. Iremadze 2007, p. 74–75.
42 Vgl. Iremadze 2006, p. 135–143.
43 Anton I. (= Bagrationi) 1991.
44 Anton I. 1991, p. 327–331.

Anton I. geht soweit, daß er die Spontaneität der erkennenden Vernunft im Anschluß an die von Petrizi angeführten Philosophen (z. B. Porphyrios) erläutert.[45] In den Fragen der Erkenntnistheorie ist Petrizi für ihn der wichtigste Autor. Dies bezeugt seine Erörterung des Erkenntnisgegenstandes.

Die letzten Kapitel des Werks *Spekali* sind Petrizi gewidmet. In den Kapiteln 148 und 149 behandelt Anton I. die Erkenntnisthematik aufgrund der *Nous*-Propositionen der *Auslegung*. Hier wird nämlich in Anlehnung an Petrizi behauptet, daß die *vernünftige* Erkenntnis von der Erkenntnisart der Seele unterschieden ist: Im Wesen der Vernunft bilden ihre Aktivität und ihre Substanz eine Einheit, die *seelische* Natur präsentiert sich dagegen als differenziert. Das Wesen und die Tätigkeit der Seele lassen sich unterscheiden, denn die Erkenntnis ist nicht die *primäre* Qualität der Seele. Bei ihrer Erkenntnis bewegt sich die Seele von einem Seienden zum anderen, d. h. die erworbenen Kenntnisse gelten hier als die Grundlagen für das Fortschreiten des Wissens. Die *vernünftige* Erkenntnis muß man anders charakterisieren, da die Tätigkeit der Vernunft im *ewigen* Erkennen begründet ist und die Vernunft in ihrem Wesen sich nicht anders als diese Aktivität versteht. An dieser Stelle muß bemerkt werden, daß sich Anton I. für die Charakteristik seines Erkenntniskonzepts der *noetischen* Terminologie aus Petrizis *Proklos-Kommentar* intensiv bediente. Seine wichtigen philosophischen Bestimmungen der *Noetik* sind ausschließlich im Hinblick auf Petrizi ausgearbeitet worden.

Anton I. hat die armenische Version der *Elementatio theologica* scharf kritisiert, denn sie stelle nicht die echte Lehre des Proklos bzw. Petrizis dar. Die wahre Metaphysik wurde hier – wie er in seiner (noch nicht edierten) *Theologie* hervorhebt – mit falschen Theorien kombiniert und deshalb entstellt. Seiner Ansicht nach sollte man die alte Version der *Elementatio theologica* (Petrizi) studieren und nicht die neue (armenische).[46] Damit sprach er sich für Petrizi aus, denn dessen Auslegung der Proklischen *Nous*-Thematik sollte gelten und nicht ihre willkürlichen Transformationen der modernen armenischen und georgischen Exegeten.

(3) Im Unterschied zu Anton I. (Bagrationi) benutzt Joane Bagrationi (1768–1830)[47] in seinem Hauptwerk *Kalmasoba* (dt.: „Die fröhliche Lehre"), das er in den Jahren von 1813 bis 1828 schrieb, hauptsächlich die armenischen Kommentare zur *Elementatio theologica*. Es ist besonders hervorzuheben, daß das

45 Anton I. 1991, p. 327–329.
46 Vgl. Dedabrischwili 1974, p. 64–65.
47 Vgl. Gogatishvili 2014, p. 81–90.

Werk *Kalmasoba* als Dialog verfasst wurde. Dort spielt Jona Khelaschwili (1778–1837), einer der bedeutenden georgischen Theologen und Philosophen der Neuzeit, bei den Gesprächspartnern die wichtigste Rolle.[48] Dieser übernimmt hier etwa jene Funktion, die Sokrates in den platonischen Dialogen besitzt. Bei der Bestimmung des Einen und seiner Dialektik zitiert er die ersten Kapitel des Proklischen Werks. Auch die auf den *Nous* bezogenen Kapitel (z. B. *prop.* 20) finden im *Kalmasoba* eine angemessene Berücksichtigung. In diesem Werk erläutert Joane Bagrationi nicht alle Kapitel der *Elementatio theologica*, sondern insgesamt 86. Bemerkenswert ist, daß der Verfasser einige Stellen aus Proklos bzw. Petrizis Werk auf originäre Art und Weise interpretiert bzw. transformiert; bei der Erörterung der Ursachenproblematik unterscheidet er zunächst zwischen drei Hauptarten – Gott, Natur und Fertigkeit – und betont die Überlegenheit Gottes gegenüber allen anderen Ursachen.[49] Dies läßt sich vor allem damit erklären: Joane Bagrationi hat sich der Kommentare des Svimeon Dshughaezi bedient und Proklos sowie Petrizi durch sie zu interpretieren versucht. Auch die *Noetik* der *Elementatio theologica* brachte Joane Bagrationi auf einen eindeutigen Nenner, indem er die verschiedenen Arten und Funktionen der Erkenntnis herausstellte und die erkennende Seele als das Spezifikum des Menschen bezeichnete. Dies war ebenfalls ein Gedanke aus den Kommentaren des Svimeon. Für die Begründung seines Konzepts definierte Joane Bagrationi das Gute als das Prinzip des Seienden als solchen; die Rangordnung der verschiedenen Entitäten sah er in diesem Prinzip des Kosmos verwurzelt. Dazu dient auch seine überzeugende Erklärung der *kausalen* Triadik: Sowohl der Hervorgang als auch die eigenständige Existenz und Rückwendung setzten ein erstes Prinzip voraus, und zwar das Gute. Auch andere Themen der *Elementatio theologica* sind von Joane Bagrationi detailliert diskutiert worden: Zeit – Ewigkeit / Körper – Seele / Potenz – Akt usw. Somit darf konstatiert werden, daß Petrizis *Proklos-Werk* unter rezeptionsgeschichtlicher Perspektive in Georgien, aber auch in Armenien eine bedeutsame Rolle gespielt hat.[50]

Die *Elementatio theologica* des Proklos und seine Lehre hat im Kaukasus in der Spätantike, im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit viele wichtige Interessenten gefunden. Wie ihre Rezeptions- und Transformationsgeschichte zeigt, war der Philosophiebegriff des Proklos dort von besonderer Bedeutung. Zusammen mit Pythagoras, Platon und Aristoteles galt er als einer der wichtigsten

48 Vgl. Iremadze 2014b, 91–96; Metropolitan of Poti and Khobi Grigoli (Berbichashvili) 2014, p. 146–152.

49 Vgl. Iremadze 2011, p. 96–111.

50 Joane Bagrationi 1974.

Denker der antiken Philosophie. Die kaukasischen Philosophen nutzten daher gern seine Lehre bei der Bestimmung der Aufgabe der Philosophie und ihres Wesens. Eine interessante Aufgabe künftiger Untersuchungen der Philosophiegeschichte wird es daher sein, zu zeigen, wie die Transformation der *Elementatio theologica* bzw. der *Liber de causis* im Kaukasus gewirkt hat. Hier wartet auf sachkundige Wissenschaftler ein bedeutsames Forschungsfeld. Durch weitere Untersuchungen auf diesem Gebiet könnten sie zur Erweiterung unserer Kenntnis der Wirkungsgeschichte des proklischen Gedankengutes bzw. der *Elementatio theologica* beitragen.

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PART 3

The Lands of Islam

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CHAPTER 7

Porphyry and the *Theology of Aristotle*

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1 Introduction

Despite the fact that the *Theology of Aristotle* states, in its preface, that it is a commentary (Arabic *tafsīr*) by Porphyry, and that we know from Porphyry's own testimony that he composed commentaries (ὑπομνήματα) on some of the *Enneads* of Plotinus, current scholarly consensus denies that Porphyry played any role in the elaboration of this work.[1]

No historian of philosophy has made more important contributions to the study of the *Theology of Aristotle* (hereafter ThA) and the *Plotiniana Arabica* in general than Cristina D'Ancona, and I have taken this exemplary scholar to be representative of what I will call the anti-Porphyrian view. In what follows, I would like to re-examine and criticially engage with some of C. D'Ancona's views on the possible role of Porphyry in the elaboration of the *Theology of Aristotle*.

2 The Evidence. The Preface to the *Theology of Aristotle*

As is well known, the *Theology of Aristotle* opens with a Preface, which reads as follows:

> The first chapter of the book of the philosopher Aristotle, that is called in Greek "Theology". It is the discourse on Divine Sovereignty, commentary (*tafsīr*) by Porphyry of Tyre, translated into Arabic by ʿAbd al-Masīḥ

1 Among these studies, in addition to those of C. D'Ancona, I include those of Zimmermann 1986 and Adamson 2002. According to Zimmermann 1986, p. 131, followed by Adamson, the mention of Porphyry as commentator results from a "simple-minded error" committed at some stage of the transmission process in which Porphyry was originally mentioned as Plotinus' pupil and editor.

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> ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Nāʿima al-Ḥimṣī, corrected for Aḥmad ibn al-Muʿtaṣim bi-llah by Abū Yūsuf ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī, may God have mercy upon him.[2]

This paragraph transmits several precious items of information: it identifies the work's translator as the Syrian Christian ibn Nāʿima al-Ḥimṣī,[3] its corrector or editor as al-Kindī, and its dedicatee as al-Muʿtaṣim bi-llāh, son of the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim—which enables the translation to be dated to between 833 and 842 of our era.[4] Two points in particular have given rise to controversy: the attribution to Aristotle,[5] and the implications of the words "commentary by Porphyry of Tyre".[6] Following a long line of scholars, but especially the late Pierre Thillet, I will argue in this contribution that we should take this latter statement seriously.

In 1933, Willy Theiler suggested that in all of the many passages in which Augustine quotes or alludes to Plotinus, his knowledge came not from direct reading of Plotinus, but from Porphyry. "We hasard the supposition," wrote Theiler,[7] "that Augustine himself never read Plotinus' *Enneads* (in translation), that the quotations in him from Plotinus (…) are taken from work by Porphyry, as was the case for many later authors, who were happy to rely on his interpretation of Plotinus".[8] Thus, on this hypothesis,[9] almost all of Plotinus' considerable

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2 Badawi 1955, p. 1. Cf. Aouad 1989, p. 546. All translations from Greek and Arabic are my own unless otherwise indicated.

3 On this figure and his intellectual background, see now the important study by Treiger 2015.

4 Adamson 2002, p. 9.

5 The question here is whether the attribution to Aristotle is the result of a deliberate forgery or an honest, albeit ignorant mistake (Zimmermann 1986, p. 128). I agree with D'Ancona 2003b, p. 85 f. that the hypothesis of a deliberate forgery is much more likely. Cf. the Prologue of the work, p. 5, 12–13, where the author states, using the first person: "let us not waste words over this branch of knowledge, since we have already given an account of it in the book of the *Metaphysics*" (trans. Lewis). Despite Zimmermann's attempts to explain away this passage, it seems clear that the Adaptor is here impersonating Aristotle; cf. D'Ancona 2007, p. 45; D'Ancona 2011b, p. 13 n. 28. I would argue that this impersonation is implicit throughout the work.

6 *tafsīr Furfuriyūs al-Ṣūrī*. Although the word *tafsīr* can have many meanings, all of them refer to the basic sense of "interpretation". As a synonym of *šarḥ*, *tafsīr* refers to a systematic commentary; cf. Gacek 2009, p. 79. It is, for instance, the word used in the titles of the Long Commentaries of Averroes.

7 Theiler 1966, p. 161.

8 Theiler cites the example of Macrobius, who sometimes claims to be quoting Plotinus when he is in fact probably quoting Porphyry. At *In somnium Scipionis*, I 8, 5, for instance, Macrobius supposedly cites Plotinus' *De virtutibus* (I 2), where a comparison with *Sent*. 32 suggests his real source was Porphyry (cf. Schwyzer 1974, p. 227); at *In somn*. I 13, 9 f. Macrobius claims to be citing from *Enneads* I 9, but again, he seems to be relying on Porphyry's commentary.

9 This hypothesis is, of course, extremely controversial. Rejected by Henry 1934, for instance, it was accepted by Dörrie 1976a; 1976b.

influence on the Latin West throughout Antiquity and the Middle Ages was due, not to direct reading of Plotinus, who seems never to have been translated into Latin, but to explanatory commentaries by Porphyry,[10] which may, like other works by the philosopher from Tyre, have been translated by Marius Victorinus. According to Heinich Dörrie,[11] even in the Greek-speaking East, the understanding of Plotinus shown by Gregory of Nyssa, for instance, is essentially that of Plotinus as interpreted by Porphyry. Porphyry seems to have been famous for his explanations of Plotinus even during his lifetime. As Eunapius records in his *Lives of the Sophists*:

> For Plotinus, because of the celestial nature of his soul and the oblique and enigmatic character of his discourses, seemed heavy and hard to listen to. But Porphyry, like a chain of Hermes let down to mortals, by his variegated culture expounded everything in a way that was easy to understand and clear.[12]

The main vehicle by which the thought of Plotinus was handed down to the Latin West was, according to Theiler, Porphyry's commentaries (ὑπομνήματα) on the *Enneads*.[13] What, then, were these Porphyrian ὑπομνήματα on the *Enneads* of Plotinus?

3 The Evidence. Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*

Near the end of his *Life of Plotinus*, written in 301, some thirty years after Plotinus' death, Porphyry summarizes his activity, past and present, as editor of his teacher's *Enneads*.

10 Cf. Dörrie 1976a, p. 467.

11 Dörrie 1976b, p. 28.

12 Eunapius of Sardes, *Vitae Sophistarum*, IV, 11, p. 9, 13–17. Cf. Dörrie 1976a, p. 465: Porphyry "war der einzige, der die oft schwierigen Gedankengänge Plotins in verständliches Griechisch zu dolmetschen vermochte." Dörrie goes so far as to refer to Porphyry as "Plotinus' publicist and translator" (1976a, p. 466).

13 As an example of the indirect tradition of Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα, Theiler cites Aeneas of Gaza, *Theophrastus*, p. 45, 7–8 Colonna: "Porphyry (…) interpreting Plotinus' book *Where does evil come from*? says somewhere, arguing that matter is not ungenerated …" (translation Dillon/Russell 2012, p. 40). Cf. Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, III, 5, p. 6, 15–16: "In addition, he [Porphyry] clearly commented on several of his [Plotinus'] books."

> So we arranged the fifty-four books in this way in six *Enneads*, and we have written commentaries on some of them without any order (καταβεβλήμεθα δὲ καὶ εἴς τινα αὐτῶν ὑπομνήματα ἀτάκτως),[14] because friends urged us to write on points they wanted cleared up for them. We also composed headings (κεφάλαια) for all of them except *On Beauty*, because it was not available to us, following the chronological order in which the books were issued; and we have produced not only the headings for each book but also summaries of the arguments (ἐπιχειρήματα), which are numbered in the same way as the headings.[15]

In addition to the treatises of the *Enneads* themselves, Porphyry here informs us that he has added three kinds of items to his edition: headings (κεφάλαια), or abbreviated descriptions of contents;[16] summaries of the arguments (ἐπιχειρήματα); and commentaries (ὑπομνήματα). Based on Porphyry's testimony, C. D'Ancona, following earlier scholars,[17] has proposed a two-stage process of elaboration:

1. As the treatises were first issued (c. 263–270),[18] Porphyry first provided them with headings, and wrote commentaries on some of them, at the request of his ἑταῖροι, i.e., presumably, his fellow members of the School of Plotinus.
2. Some thirty years later, when preparing his definitive edition of the *Enneads*, Porphyry added summaries of the arguments of the treatises, which "are numbered as headings" (ἃ ὡς κεφάλαια συναριθμεῖται). These headings, probably numbered, were not copied by the scribe of the archetype of the surviving manuscripts of the *Enneads*, but some manuscripts preserve traces of them in the form of marginal numbers, probably intended as references to Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα, κεφάλαια, and/or ἐπιχειρήματα.[19]

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14 Note Porphyry's emphasis that his commentaries were written "without any order," and compare the frequent observation of modern commentators that the *Theology of Aristotle* lacks any order; cf. Zimmermann 1986, p. 130, who speaks of the *Plotiniana Arabica*'s "chaos".

15 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, ch. 26.

16 On κεφάλαια in Greek texts, see for instance Regenbogen 1940, p. 1472–1475; Goulet-Cazé 1982, p. 315–321; Scholten 1996, p. 28 f. To the examples listed by Scholten one may add the κεφάλαια contained in the manuscripts of the *Commentary on the Categories* by Dexippus; cf. Dexippus, *In Cat.*, p. 1–3 (Book I); 36–38 (Book II); 62–63 (Book III).

17 In particular, Goulet-Cazé 1982.

18 That Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα on the *Enneads* represent an earlier work was pointed out by Theiler, *Porphyrios und Augustin*, 17 = 1966, p. 180 n. 41.

19 D'Ancona 2012, p. 53–54. On these marginal numbers, see Goulet-Cazé, 1982, p. 313.

It has long been suggested that the headings (*ru'ūs al-masā'il*) preserved in the *Theology of Aristotle*,[20] 142 short sentences indicating the contents of the first 34 chapters of *Ennead* IV 4 [28], bear some relation to these lost features of Porphyry's edition. Although this was disputed by Zimmermann,[21] recent work by C. D'Ancona[22] has confirmed that these headings preserved in the *Theology of Aristotle* are in fact remnants of the Arabic translation of Porphyry's κεφάλαια and ἐπιχειρήματα.[23]

Two of the three editorial features that Porphyry, according to his own testimony, added to the *Enneads*, have thus been shown to be included in the *Theology of Aristotle*, although only the faintest traces survive of them in the Greek tradition. This being the case, it does not seem to be wildly unlikely that the third element, Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα, may also have left traces in this work as well. If this is so, however, since these ὑπομνήματα were composed some thirty years before Porphyry's edition of the *Enneads*, we could expect them to reflect a relatively early phase in the Tyrian scholar's philosophical development. This might partially explain what some authors, including C. D'Ancona, have taken to be the philosophical incompetence of the author of the *Theology*, although it must be said that the reports of this incompetence seem to me to be greatly exaggerated.[24]

20 *Theology of Aristotle*, p. 8–18. Cf. Aouad 1989, p. 548–550.

21 Zimmermann 1986, p. 165–173.

22 D'Ancona 2013.

23 According to Peter Adamson (2002, p. 44–47), the headings were written by the same person who wrote the paraphrase itself. Adamson contends that the author of the paraphrase, whom he calls the Adaptor, was al-Ḥimsī; but if he accepts D'Ancona's cogent demonstration that the headings were written by Porphyry, he would have to concede, at the very least, that Porphyry was, if not the author, then at least an important contributor to what we know as the Arabic Plotinus.

24 D'Ancona agrees with Zimmermann's (1986, p. 121; 133; 173) judgment of the "pervading dilettantism" and "amateur character" of the *Theology*'s author; she argues for this judgment in D'Ancona 1991. Most of the instances she cites, however, could be explained as divergent interpretations of Plotinus' text, rather than failures to understand it. For a different view, according to which the *Theology of Aristotle* evinces "philosophical sophistication," cf. Adamson 2002, p. 2; 12 *et passim*.

4 The Doctrines

4.1 Indices porphyriens *in the* Plotiniana Arabica

As Pierre Thillet pointed out nearly a half-century ago,[25] the most fruitful way to approach the study of the sources of the *Plotiniana Arabica* is to focus on those passages which do not correspond to Plotinus' Greek, but represent interpolations into or interpretations of the text of Plotinus.[26] In ground-breaking studies first presented in 1969, Shlomo Pinès and Pierre Thillet (1971) identified what the latter scholar called "indices porphyriens," present in the *Plotiniana Arabica* but absent from Plotinus. These include the following features: a preference for describing the derivation of the various levels of the universe in causal terms;[27] the idea that the First Principle produces being, while the second principle produces Form;[28] the doctrine of learned ignorance; and the identification of the First principle with pure being.[29] For her part, C. D'Ancona has identified sev-

25 Thillet 1971, p. 295.

26 According to Zimmermann (1986, p. 116), the author of these interpolations is the translator Ibn Nāʿima al-Ḥimṣī. Yet he also admits that the presence of doctrinal shifts with regard to Plotinus may be traced back to "a common Neoplatonic vulgate," and adds that he does not mean to deny "the possibility of some reliance by Himsi on Porphyrian glosses lost to us". On the scant likelihood of Ḥimṣī being the sole author of the interpolations, cf. Daiber 1988.

27 For an example, cf. *Theology of Aristotle*, X.1, p. 134, 5, where the Adaptor transforms Plotinus' statement (V 2, 1, 1) that "the One is all things and not a single one of them" into the claim that "The absolute One is the *cause* of all things and not like any of the things". Cf., for instance, Porphyry, *In Parmenidem*, XIII, 22–23, where the intelligence "that cannot enter within itself," and is "beyond all things" (ἐπέκεινα πάντων), hence coinciding with the First One, is called "the uncoordinated cause of all things" (πάντων αἰτία ⟨ἀ⟩σύζυγος). On causality in the *Neoplatonica Arabica*, cf. D'Ancona 2001a, p. 102–103 and especially 1999a.

28 This corresponds to the doctrine C. D'Ancona (1992) has described as *creatio mediante intelligentia*.

29 On these last two principles, see below. One could add to this list. The Adaptor believes in an allegorical interpretation of the *Timaeus* (cf. Adamson 2002, p. 142–143), as did Porphyry. He is also a firm believer in the harmony of Plato and Aristotle, a topic to which Porphyry devoted two (now lost) treatises; cf. Karamanolis 2006, p. 243–330. Indeed, what D'Ancona (1998, p. 854) describes as the "crucial inspiration (…) that Aristotle and Plato were not at variance with one another, transmitted to the first falāsifa by the Alexandrian commentators," was already to be found in Porphyry; cf. I. Hadot 2015, p. 54–64. Adamson (2002, p. 69) has noted that the Adaptor was more concerned with ethics than Plotinus, or was interested in making explicit the ethical dimension of Plotinian thought; compare Porphyry's elaboration of the Plotinian scheme of the virtues in his *Sentence* 32, or the hortatory ethical tone of such works as the *De abstinentia* or the *Letter to Marcella*. D'Ancona (2007, p. 45) and others have called attention to the Adaptor's importa-

eral additional non-Plotinian features as characteristic of the *Theology of Aristotle*. These include the transformation of Plotinus's One into a principle that creates what derives from it instantaneously and by its being alone; that thinks and knows its derivatives; and that exercises providence over them. D'Ancona argues that most of these features derive from the Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, with whose writings the Christian translator al-Ḥimṣī will, she believes, have been familiar.[30] In what follows I will examine her arguments with regard to some of these characteristic doctrines.

4.2 *The Identification of the First Principle with Being*

Perhaps the most striking of the doctrines that are present in the *Plotiniana Arabica*, but absent from Plotinus, is the one that identifies the First Principle with pure being (Arabic *anniyya* or *huwiyya*, terms that usually translate the Greek neuter participle τὸ ὄν, or the infinitive τὸ εἶναι).[31] Yet the anonymous *Commentary on the Parmenides*, ascribed with great plausibility to Porphyry,[32] contains the doctrine of the One as pure being (τὸ εἶναι) in a manner closely

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tion of Aristotelian material into the *Plotiniana Arabica*: compare Porphyry's inclusion of Peripatetic material into his exposition of Plotinus in his *Sentences* (Schwyzer 1974, p. 227). Porphyry's lost *Commentary on the Categories* addressed to Gedalios seems to have been largely devoted to defending Aristotle's doctrines against the attacks of Plotinus; cf. P. Hadot 1974.

30 According to the current state of scholarship (Treiger 2005, p. 234; 2007, p. 366), the only known translation of the entire *Corpus Dionysiacum* into Arabic is that by ʿĪsā b. Isḥāq Ibn Saḥqūq, also a native of Ḥims, which is extant in two MSS (Sinai MS ar. 268; 314) and dates from 1009, nearly two centuries after Ibn Nāʿima's translation of the *Theology of Aristotle*. To be sure, some earlier, partial translations did exist: but the version of *Divine Names* 4.18–35 by Ibrāhim b. Yūḥannā al-Anṭākī dates from the late 9th-early 10th centuries (Treiger 2007, p. 238), while the anonymous translation of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 1–9 is also ascribed conjecturally to al-Anṭākī (ibid., p. 238 & n. 85). If so, then even these fragmentary Arabic translations of the Ps.-Dionysius postdate the translation of the *Theology of Aristotle* by at least half a century. It is true, however, that various Syriac translations of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* were in circulation since the late 6th century. In a forthcoming paper (Treiger 2020), Professor Treiger claims to have discovered a "ninth-century Arabic Dionysian paraphrase" which he reconstructs on the basis of passages in various works al-Ġazālī. Despite the author's great erudition, I am not convinced by his arguments. The passages he discusses show thematic, but not lexicographical similarities, and I see no reason to believe they represent "paraphrases" of an (otherwise unattested) early periphrastic translation of Dionysian texts, rather than independent treatments of themes that were widely diffused in Greek Neoplatonic and Patristic texts.

31 Thillet 1971, p. 301; Pinès 1971, p. 305, D'Ancona, 2000, p. 56. *Anniyya* more often translates τὸ εἶναι, while *huwiyya* more often renders τὸ ὄν; cf. Endress 1997, p. 61; Adamson 2002, p. 219 n. 32.

32 On this attribution, cf. for instance Chase 2012; Chase, *in press*.

parallel to the doctrine of the first principle as *anniyya faqaṭ*[33] ('simple being'), which plays a crucial role in the *Plotiniana Arabica*.

I need not go into this subject in detail, since it's been expertly addresed by Richard Taylor (1998), among others. Suffice it to say that Cristina D'Ancona believes that the argumentative context of the occurrence of the formula of "pure being" (*anniyya faqaṭ*) in the *Plotiniana Arabica* and "being" (τὸ εἶναι) in Porphyry's *Commentary on the Parmenides* are too different to able to prove the dependence of the former on the latter. Even if one acknowledges this difference, however, it remains possible that Porphyry may have included the same doctrine within a *different* argumentative context in his lost *Commentaries on the Enneads*. In any case, the parallels in formulation between the *Plotiniana Arabica* and the *In Parmenidem* remain quite striking, as when the Adaptor decribes the First Principle as "pure act" (*al-fi'l al-maḥḍ*, p. 51, 13), while Porphyry says that the first principle "acts, or rather is pure action" (ἐνεργεῖ δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν καθαρόν; *In Parmenidem*, 12, 26). It is crucial to note, as Richard Taylor and Peter Adamson have pointed out, that this notion of the First Principle as pure act is not to be found in the Pseudo-Dionysius, whom D'Ancona has identified as the likely source for the *Plotiniana Arabica*'s doctrine of the First Principle as being.[34]

4.3 *Porphyry and the* Plotiniana Arabica *on Soul and Intellect*

I will also have to be brief in my discussion of Cristina d'Ancona's important article from 1999, entitled "Porphyry, Universal Soul and the Arabic Plotinus". Here, D'Ancona starts off from what she describes as the characteristic Porphyrian tendency to minimize the difference between the hypostases of Soul and Intellect, sometimes to the point of identifying them. One of the main proof texts of this doctrine is a passage from Iamblichus' *De anima*:[35]

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33 The term *anniyya*, of disputed etymology (cf. Adamson 2002, p. 124–126), occurs some 87 times in the *Theology*, most frequently in contexts without parallels in the *Enneads*, with the meanings of "being, existence, reality"; cf. Thillet 1971, p. 301. For the First Principle as *al-anniyya al-ūlā* cf. *Theology of Aristotle*, p. 26; 27; 51; 87, and compare Marius Victorinus (*Adv. Ar.*, II, 4, 8, 1092; IV, 16, 29, 1025A), who, probably under Porphryian influence, calls God *esse primum*. Cf. Pinès 1971, p. 310.

34 It seems to me unlikely that, as Taylor and Adamson suggest, this notion may have been independently developed, on the basis of the Plotinus' *Ennead* VI.8, by Porphyry and the Adaptor of the *Theology of Aristotle*, simply because, as far as I know, very few Greek authors other than Aristotle, Plotinus, Porphyry ever proposed such a doctrine. For two subsequent authors to come up with such an unusual doctrine independently of one another seems to be too much of a coincidence, especially when one adds that the *Theology of Aristotle* presents itself as the work of Porphyry.

35 Porphyry fr. 441, ap. Iamblichus, *De Anima*, 6, p. 30, 10–13: Πορφύριος δὲ ἐνδοιάζει περὶ αὐτήν,

> As for Porphyry, he is of two minds on the subject, now dissociating himself violently from this view, now adopting it as a doctine handed down from above. According to this doctrine, the soul differs in no way from intellect and the gods, and the superior classes of being, at least in respect to its substance in general.

This "typical confusion" of Soul and Intellect is, according to D'Ancona, absent from the *Theology of Aristotle* in passages where one would expect it to appear. This shows that the Porphyry is unlikely to have been the main Greek source behind the *Theology of Aristotle*.

I would have two main responses. First, *argumenta e silentio* are of notoriously doubtful value: it is a tricky business to infer what Porphyry *would* or *should* have said in any given passage of his lost *Commentary on the Enneads*. He may have had his reasons for omitting the doctrine from the passages in question, or the Adaptor may, for whatever reason, have chosen to omit this portion of Porphyry's comments. More tellingly, however, Peter Adamson has found traces in the *Theology of Aristotle* of precisely this Porphyrian hesitation over the distinction between the hypostases, particularly Soul and Intellect. Alongside passages in which the Plotinian hypostases of the One, Intellect, Soul, and the sensible world are clearly distinguished,[36] Adamson points out that there are others which exhibit what he calls a "tendency to compress the emanative hierarchy," passages which "collapse the soul and intellect together".[37] Such hesitancy is indeed strongly reminiscent of A.C. Lloyd's description of what he called Porphyry's typical "telescoping of the hypostases," as well as of Iamblichus' characterization of Porphyry as "being of two minds on the subject".[38]

4.4 *The Doctrine of Learned Ignorance*

What has been called the doctrine of learned ignorance or *docta ignorantia* holds that in order to grasp the nature of the first principle, one needs to make use not of discursive or even intuitive thought, but of a higher form of knowledge that can be likened to ignorance. Although Hermetic, Neo-Pythagorean,

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πῇ μὲν διατεταμένως αὐτῆς ἀφιστάμενος, πῇ δὲ συνακολουθῶν αὐτῇ, ὡς παραδοθείσῃ ἄνωθεν. Κατὰ δὴ ταύτην νοῦ καὶ θεῶν καὶ τῶν κρειττόνων γενῶν οὐδὲν ἡ ψυχὴ διενήνοχε κατά γε τὴν ὅλην οὐσίαν.

36 Adamson (2002, p. 220 n. 51) cites *Sayings of the Greek Sage* 1.41–45.

37 Cf., with Adamson, *Epistle of the Divine Science*, p. 166–168; *Theology of Aristotle* X.192, p. 163 B.; *Theology of Aristotle* X.31, p. 138–139 B. "Even more than Plotinus," writes Adamson (n. 53), "he [sc. the Adaptor] treats the intelligible world (soul and intellect together) as having one single nature".

38 Lloyd 1967.

and Middle Platonist authors, through their use of the techniques of negative theology,[39] had paved the way for this doctrine before the time of Porphyry, it found its most explicit formulation in the Tyrian philosopher. In his *Sentence* 25, for instance, we read:

> On the subject of that which is beyond Intellect (…) it is grasped only by means of an ignorance superior to intellection (ἀνοησίᾳ κρείττονι νοήσεως).[40]

Similarly, in Porphyry's *Commentary on the Parmenides* (X, 25–29, p. 96 Hadot), one reads that the only criterion of the knowledge (γνῶσις) of God is the ignorance (ἀγνωσία) that one has of him. Finally, the *Theosophy of Tübingen* reports that Porphyry said that knowledge of the First Principle is ignorance (ἀλλ' ἔστιν αὐτοῦ γνῶσις ἡ ἀγνωσία).[41] As Willy Theiler pointed out long ago, Augustine is very probably dependent on Porphyry when he writes about "that highest God, who is best known through ignorance of him".[42]

As in the case of the doctrine of the First Principle as being, C. D'Ancona denies that the presence of this admittedly Porphyrian doctrine in two passages of the *Theology of Aristotle*[43] can be taken as proof of a Porphyrian role in the elaboration of this work. The Arabic passages, she contends, do not reflect Porphyry's arguments, but only the formula, stripped from its context.[44] In conclusion, while conceding that the author of the *Theology* may have been influenced by the Porphyrian formula of "ignorance greater than knowledge," stripped of its context, C. D'Ancona prefers to explain the presence of this

39 On the origins of negative theology in Greco-Roman Antiquity, the discussion in Festugière 1954, p. 92–140 remains unsurpassed. On negative theology in Porphyry see, most recently, Beatrice 2016, p. 126–130.

40 Translation Dillon, in L. Brisson et al., ed., 2005, vol. II, p. 566–567, modified. Cf. Porphyry, *In Parmenidem*, II, 17 on μηδὲν ἐνοούσῃ νοήσει.

41 *Theosophia Tubignesis*, II, 13, p. 34, 109 Beatrice. For these and other references, cf. the notes by Jean Pépin in L. Brisson et al., ed., 2005, vol. II, p. 566–567.

42 Augustine, *De ordine* 2, XVI, 44, 18–19: *de summo illo Deo, qui scitur melius nesciendo*. Cf. Theiler 1966, p. 173 n. 29; Beatrice 2016, p. 127.

43 *Theology of Aristotle* p. 9, 8; *Theology of Aristotle* II, p. 37, 2–4. With the Arabic *bi-jahlin ašraf min al-ʿilm*, cf. Porphyry's ἀνοησίᾳ κρείττονι νοήσεως.

44 D'Ancona 1993, p. 6. Adamson (2002) uses similar considerations to reject Porphyrian influence on the doctrine of *docta ignorantia* as found in the *Theology of Aristotle*, arguing—unconvincingly, in my view—that both the *Theology of Aristotle* and the author of the *Parmenides* commentary developed the notion independently, on the basis of Aristotle and Plotinus' *Ennead* VI.9.

theme in the *Theology* by an influence of the Ps.-Dionysius, who she admits derived his inspiration from Porphyry.[45]

As in the case of the doctrine of the First Cause as Being, such an approach might be adequate if it were the case that we knew that Porphyry had expressed the doctrine of learned ignorance *only* in *Sentence* 25 and in the *Commentary on the Parmenides*. But we have no reason to believe that this is so: Porphyry may have discussed this doctrine in any number of those of his many works that happen not to have come down to us.[46] If the non-Plotinian interpolations in the *Theology of Aristotle* were in one way or another based on a *lost* commentary or commentaries by Porphyry on the *Enneads* of Plotinus, why could Porphyry not have expressed his doctrine of learned ignorance in this work, using a different argumentative context, different proofs and different examples? Like Adamson (*supra* n. 44), D'Ancona sometimes seems to argue almost as though the claim of the pro-Porphyrian advocates was that the author of the *Theology* was influenced by an Arabic translation of Porphyry's *Sentences* or *Commentary on the Parmenides*:[47] but this is of course not the case. Instead, the claim is that that author was influenced by a *lost* commentary or commentaries by Porphyry on the *Enneads*.

4.5 *Divine Knowledge and Providence*

In an important series of papers,[48] Cristina D'Ancona has argued that one finds in the *Plotiniana Arabica* a phenomenon she has referred to, following Zimmer-

45 Adamson, for his part, also arguing for some form of Dionysian influence, claims that if the Porphyrian hypothesis, which claims that Porphyry wrote the Greek basis of the *Theology of Aristotle*, were true "we would expect to find an extensive Porphyian development on the theme of ignorance," which is not the case. But (i) there is no "extensive development on the theme of divine ignorance" elsewhere in Porphyry's surviving works, either, although it is an indisputably Porphyrian doctrine; and (ii) even if there were such a development in Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα, the Adaptor may simply have chosen not to reproduce it. No one is claiming that the *Plotiniana Arabica* is merely a complete and mindless transcription of Porphyry's lost commentaries, but that it is *based on* such commentaries.

46 In the latest enumeration of Porphyry's works, R. Goulet (2012) lists 60 titles of works by Porphyry, excluding his commentaries (11 on Aristotle, 7 on Plato; cf. Chase, 2012, p. 1349–1376). Few of these works survive: some two dozen have been edited in modern times, often in the form of collection of fragments. Even in the case of a preserved, well-edited work like the *Sentences*, however, only about half, at most, of the original work has come down to us; cf. Schwyzer 1974, p. 223.

47 Cf. D'Ancona 1993, p. 14, where she argues that the verbal link between Sentence 25 and the 16th question head of the *Theology* "is not complete enough to admit that it reproduces the Porphyrian passage". But no one has claimed that the Arabic text *reproduces* a text from Porphyry's *Sentences*!

48 D'Ancona 1997; D'Ancona 1999a; D'Ancona 2002; D'Ancona 2003.

mann,[49] as an Aristotelianization of Plotinus.[50] In Plotinus, as is well known, there is a twofold, and symmetrical, lack of knowledge as far as the First Principle is concerned. As we have seen when discussing the doctrine of *docta ignorantia*, the One cannot be known by what is inferior to it and derives from it. Symmetrically, the First Principle does not think,[51] but is beyond thought.[52]

For Plotinus, at any rate, the proximate agent in ensuring divine providence is the Intellect, and since it is the source of that Intellect, the One need not actually *do* anything in order for *pronoia* over the universe to be ensured. Instead, it ensures providence by its mere existence.[53] This tendency is intensified in Proclus, for whom the First Principle cannot know its derivatives. In order to preserve the First Principle's utter transcendence, knowledge of its derivatives, and consequently the divine providence which presupposes such knowledge, is delegated to the henads or intelligible gods. In the *Plotiniana Arabica*, by contrast, the First Principle is said both to know and to exercize providence over its derivatives. C. D'Ancona has characterized this elimination of the henads and attribution of their functions to the First Principle as a return beyond Proclus to Plotinus, at least in the sense that omnipresence is restored to the First Principle,[54] and it is to be explained, in her view, by the influence of the Pseudo-Dionysius, who similarly transfers cognitive and providential functions from the henads back to the First Principle. For C. D'Ancona, this return was made possible by the Christian translator Ibn Nāʿima's knowledge of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, in whom we find Proclus' association of universal providence with an omnipresent divine principle, now attributed to a God who creates by being alone.

This is certainly a possible reconstruction, but one may wonder if it is the only possible one. In particular, one may wonder whether the Pseudo-Dionysius is the only thinker who may have propitiated this return, beyond

49 Cf. Zimmermann 1986, p. 124–125.

50 D'Ancona, 1997, p. 421.

51 This is the theme of *Ennead* V 6 [24]; cf. D'Ancona 1997, p. 427–428; D'Ancona 2002, p. 22 f., with discussion of the key Plotinian texts; D'Ancona 2003, p. 216 f., p. 227. See also Krämer 1964, p. 394–403; Rist 1967, p. 38–52.

52 There are, however, passages in which Plotinus suggests that a certain kind of knowledge may, after all, be attributed to the One, a knowledge that may be characterized as a kind of hyper-knowledge (ὑπερνόησις, VI 8, 16, 32) or simple self-intuition (VI 7, 39, 1–2). This strange kind of (hyper-)intellectual activity is the source of all other kinds of thought as they occur in inferior beings. Cf. Linguiti 1995, p. 158, with references to further literature.

53 D'Ancona, 2002, p. 26, 29; Gerson 1994, citing VI 7, 39, 26–27; VI 7, 37, 29–31.

54 DAncona 1999a, p. 61.

Proclus, to the notion of a First Principle that knows and exercizes providence over its derivatives.

We do indeed find another such thinker: none other than Porphyry, who, in his *Commentary on the Parmenides*, describes the First Principle as follows:

> he never remains in ignorance of the things that will be, and has known those that have happened, he who has never come to be in ignorance.[55]

Here, then, knowledge of individual things and/or events[56] is explicitly ascribed to the First Principle: knowledge not only of present events, but also of those in the past and the future.[57] When asked by his anonymous interlocutor whether God knows the all, Porphyry replies in the affirmative; and when challenged to explain how such knowledge can avoid introducing multiplicity into God, he replies as follows:

> Because I say that it is a knowledge outside of knowledge and ignorance, from which knowledge derives[58] … He is found to be mightier than knowledge and ignorance,[59] and knowing everything, but not like other knowers (…) he is knowledge itself[60] … Thus, there is a knowledge of a knower, who proceeds from ignorance to knowledge of the known object; and again, there is absolute knowledge (γνῶσις ἀπόλυτος) that is not of the knower and the known, but that is that One, viz. knowledge, prior to all known and unknown things, which moves toward knowledge.[61]

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55 Porphyry, *In Parmenidem*, IV, 31–V, 14, p. 104: … μόνον ὅτι μηδ' ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ μένει ποτὲ τῶν ἐσομένων, γιγνόμενα δὲ ἐγνώρισεν ὁ μηδέποτε ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ γενόμενος.

56 Cf. Porphyry, *Contra Nemertium*, fr. 279F Smith, where God, equivalent to the Intellect, adjusts the lifetime of particulars to one another, with a view to what is profitable to the whole and to the duration of its harmony: οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐπὶ συμφέροντι τοῦ ὅλου καὶ ⟨εἰς⟩ τὴν διάρκειαν αὐτοῦ τῆς ἁρμονίας ἄλλον ἄλλωι ἁρμόζει (sc. ὁ θεός) χρόνον τῶν κατὰ μέρος, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ κηδεμὼν ὑπάρχων καὶ σωτὴρ καὶ ἰατρός …

57 Note the contrast here with the view of Plotinus, for whom not even the Intellect, much less the One, can know future states affairs in the sensible world; cf. Noble & Powers, 2015, p. 59, n. 20. On God's knowledge of the future, cf. Porphyry, *Against Nemertius*, fr. 280F: θεὸς δὲ εἰδὼς ὸ μέλλον …

58 Porphyry, *In Parmenidem*, V, 10–11, p. 104: Ὅτι φημὶ εἶναι γνῶσιν ἔξω γνώσεω⟨ς⟩ καὶ ἀγνοίας, ἀφ' ἧς ἡ γνῶσις.

59 Cf. *Epistle of the Divine Science*, p. 118–119, p. 175, transl. Lewis p. 323: the First Agent is "above all knowledge (*fawqa al-'ilmi*), because it is the first knowledge".

60 Porphyry, *In Parmenidem* V, 29–34, p. 108: (…) γνώσεως καὶ ἀγνοίας εὑρίσκεται [κρεί]ττων καὶ πάντα γιγνώσκ (…) ν (…) αὐτὸ τοῦ[το γνῶσις ο]ὖσα.

61 Porphyry, *In Parmenidem* VI, 4–12, p. 108–110: οὕτως ἔστι καὶ γνῶσις γιγνώσκοντος καὶ ἐξ

For Porphyry, then, the First principle is identical to knowledge itself, but the knowledge in question is one that is absolute (ἀπόλυτος), prior to the distinction between knowing subject and known object. By virtue of this knowledge, this Principle knows the All, including things that have occurred and those that will come to be.[62]

4.6 *Instantaneous Creation and Action by Being Alone*

As C. D'Ancona points out, the *Plotiniana Arabica* are characterized by two additional features that are not attested explicitly in Plotinus: the doctrine of instantaneous creation and the doctrine of action "by being alone". The two doctrines are intimately related. As we read in a passage from the *Sayings of the Greek Sage*,[63] the creative act of the First Agent must take place all at once: if it did not, unmanifested acts would still remain within him. But if this were so, he would not make things by his being alone (*lam tafʿal al-ašyāʾa bi-annihā faqaṭ*), but by some kind of reflection and motion (*bi-rawiyyati wa-ḥarakati mā*), which is absurd and repugnant.

One sees from this text that the prime consideration motivating the doctrine of creation all at once (*dafʿatan wāḥidatan*) and by being alone (*bi-anniyati* or *annihi faqaṭ*) is not so much, as Adamson contends, the avoidance of duality in the First Principle, as it is the avoidance of motion and reflection in him. And the prime motivation for excluding motion and reflection from the First Principle is that they introduce change. Yet that the First Principle must be immutable is a firm principle throughout the *Plotiniana Arabica*,[64] as it was throughout Greco-Roman Neoplatonism.[65]

ἀγνοίας εἰς γνῶσιν ἐλθόντος τοῦ γιγνωσκομένου καὶ πάλιν ἄλλη γνῶσις ἀπόλυτος οὐ [γιγν]ώ[σκοντ]ος οὖσα καὶ γιγνωσκομένου, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἓν τοῦτο γνῶσις οὖσα πρὸ παντὸς γιγ⟨ν⟩ωσκομένου καὶ ἀγνοουμένου ⟨καὶ⟩ εἰς γνῶσιν ἐρχομένου.

62 We seem to have here a case of a phenomenon frequent in Porphyry, especially in his *Sentences*, where he often reformulates the thought of Plotinus in what Schwyzer called a "schoolmasterly" and systematic way (1974, p. 227: "schulmässig"; p. 231: "strenges Systematisierung"). Here, in the case of a doctrine—the attribution of knowledge to the One—in which Plotinus displayed a certain unresolved tension, Porphyry comes up with a doctrine which is systematized to the point of rigidification, as it were, than the one found in Plotinus.

63 *Sayings of the Greek Sage* § 37, p. 98, 15–22 f. Wakelnig 2014 = ed. Badawi p. 187, 4–10.

64 Cf. *Sayings of the Greek Sage* § 32, p. 94, 7 Wakelnig 2014 = ed. Badawi, p. 184, 10: *wa-yanbaġī li-l-fāʿil al-awwal an yakūn sākinan ġayr mutaḥarrak*; cf. *Sayings of the Greek Sage* § 44, p. 114, 13–15 Wakelnig; *Theology of Aristotle* p. 33; 63; 84, 10; 88, 10 ed. Badawi.

65 Cf. Proclus, *On the Eternity of the World*, apud Philoponum, *De aeternitate mundi*, p. 55, 22 f. Rabe.

The doctrine of instantaneous creation holds that world is created in no time whatsoever, but all at once (*dafʿatan wāḥidatan* = Greek ἀθρόως).[66] Compare, once again, a passage such as *Theology of Aristotle*, p. 51, 13–14:

> When he [sc. the Creator] acts, he merely looks towards his essence and he carries out his activity all at once (*dafʿatan wāḥidatan*).[67]

Many other passages could be cited,[68] but these suffice to give the gist of the idea. It should be stressed that as in the case of the texts asserting God's identity with being, most of those mentioning the doctrine of instantaneous creation have no parallel in Plotinus.

C. D'Ancona has pointed out[69] that this doctrine has its likely source in the works of John Philoponus, several of whose works were known in Arabic translation. Yet Philoponus himself preserves a text by Porphyry that proves that this notion of instantaneous creation was already present in the latter's *Commentary on the Timaeus*:[70]

> In addition, Porphyry says that things that derive their existence from [a process of] generation and coming to be, for example a house or a ship or a plant or an animal, are also said to be generated. For this reason we do not describe a flash of lightning or a snapping of the fingers or anything else that exists and ceases to exist in an instant as generated: as Aristotle also says, all such things come to be without a [process of] generation

66 The relevant texts in the *Theology of Aristotle* have been studied by Zimmermann 1986, p. 202–205; cf. Pseudo-Ammonius, *Doxography*, 8.2; 17, 5–6 Rudolph. In the Ismaʿīlī tradition, one finds the notion of creation *dafʿatan wāḥidatan* in Nasafī, al-Sijistānī, Jābir ibn Ḥayyān, and the *Iḫwān al-Ṣafāʾ* (*Epistle* 35, 3, vol. III, p. 238, 13–21 al-Bustānī); cf. Rudolph 1989, p. 149–150; Chase 2016.

67 Speaking of the First Principle, the author of the *Epistle on Divine Science* (p. 175, 1) writes in an interpolation to his paraphrase of Ennead V 3 [49], 12.28–36: "He does not proceed from doing one thing to doing another. He makes and originates things all at once" (*lākinnahū faʿala al-ašyāʾ wa-ibtadaʿahā dafʿatan wāḥidatan*).

68 Cf. *Theology of Aristotle* p. 8, 12; 31, 3; 4; 6–7; 11; 32, 4; 41, 5.

69 D'Ancona 2001, p. 107 f.; 2003, p. 315–317.

70 Porphyry, *Commentary on the Timaeus* fr. 36, p. 23, 14–24, 5 Sodano = Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi* VI, 8, p. 148, 7–15 Rabe: ἔτι φησὶν ὁ Πορφύριος γενητὸν λέγεσθαι καὶ τὸ διὰ γενέσεως καὶ τοῦ γίνεσθαι τὸ εἶναι λαβόν, ὡς οἰκία καὶ πλοῖον καὶ φυτὸν καὶ ζῷον, καθὸ τὴν ἀστραπὴν καὶ τὸν κρότον καὶ ὅσα ἐξαίφνης ὑφίσταται καὶ παύεται οὐ λέγομεν εἶναι γενητά· πάντα γὰρ τὰ τοιαῦτα, ὡς καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης φησίν, ἄνευ γενέσεως εἰς τὸ εἶναι παραγίγνεται καὶ χωρὶς φθορᾶς εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι μεταβάλλει· καὶ δῆλον, ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἂν κατὰ τοῦτο γενητὸν εἶναι τὸν κόσμον ὑπόθοιτο ὡς διὰ γενέσεως εἰς τὸ εἶναι παραγενόμενον· ἅμα γὰρ νοήματι εἰς οὐσίωσιν ὁ θεὸς τὰ πάντα παρήγαγεν.

> and switch to non-existence without [a process of] decay. It is clear that **nobody would hold that the world is generated in the sense of having to come to be through a process of generation, for God brought all things into substantification simultaneously with ⟨his⟩ thought (ἅμα γὰρ νοήματι εἰς οὐσίωσιν ὁ θεὸς τὰ πάντα παρήγαγεν).**

Here, Porphyry distinguishes things that come to be bit by bit over a period of time, whether artificial or natural, from phenomena that occur instantaneously such as lightning or a snapping of fingers: such things, which come into and out of existence instantaneously, are not said to be generated. Likewise, the world was not generated in the sense of having undergone a process of generation, but came into existence at the same time as God's thought: that is, instantaneously.

C. D'Ancona has often pointed to the importance of the formula of action by being alone (*bi-anniyati faqaṭ* = Greek αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι), referring to it as a Proclan innovation[71] and suggesting that it found its way into the *Theology of Aristotle* by way of the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. Once again, however, this idea is already to be found *expressis verbis* in Porphyry's *Commentary on the Timaeus*:[72]

> The fourth point of [Porphyry's] arguments, in addition to what has been said, is that in which he shows that the divine Intellect carries out its mode of creation (δημιουργία) **by its mere being (αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι)**, and he

71 Cf. D'Ancona 1995, p. 148–149.

72 Porphyry, *Commentary on the Timaeus*, fr. 51, p. 38, 5–15 f. Sodano = Proclus, *In Timaeum*, vol. 1, 395, 10 f. ed. Diels, translation Runia-Share (modified): Τέταρτον πρὸς τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἐστὶ τῶν λόγων κεφάλαιον, ἐν ᾧ τὸν τρόπον ἐπιδεικνύει τῆς δημιουργίας **αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι** τὸν θεῖον νοῦν ἐπιτελούμενον, καὶ κατασκευάζει διὰ πλειόνων· καὶ γὰρ οἱ τεχνῖται δέονται πρὸς τὴν ἐνέργειαν ὀργάνων διὰ τὸ μὴ πάσης κρατεῖν τῆς ὕλης, δηλοῦσι δὲ καὶ αὐτοῖς τοῖς ὀργάνοις χρώμενοι πρὸς τὸ εὐεργὸν ποιῆσαι τὴν ὕλην, τρυπῶντες ἢ ξέοντες ἢ τορνεύοντες, ἃ δὴ πάντα οὐ τὸ εἶδος ἐντίθησιν, ἀλλ' ἐξαιρεῖ τὴν ἀνεπιτηδειότητα τοῦ δεξομένου τὸ εἶδος· **αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ λόγος ἀχρόνως ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης παραγίνεται τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ**, πάντων ἐξαιρεθέντων τῶν ἐμποδών. καὶ εἰ μηδὲν ἦν καὶ τούτοις ἐμπόδιον, **τό τε εἶδος ἀθρόως ἂν τῇ ὕλῃ προσῆγον** καὶ ὀργάνων οὐδὲν ἂν ὅλως ἐδεήθησαν (…) εἰ τοίνυν καὶ τέχναι ἀνθρώπιναι καὶ ψυχῶν μερικῶν φαντασίαι καὶ δαιμόνων ἐνέργειαι τοιαῦτα δρῶσι, τί θαυμαστὸν **τὸν δημιουργὸν αὐτῷ τῷ νοεῖν τὸ πᾶν ὑπόστασιν παρέχεσθαι τῷ αἰσθητῷ**, ἀύλως μὲν ⟨παράγοντα⟩ τὸ ἔνυλον, ἀναφῶς δὲ ἀπογεννῶντα τὸ ἁπτόν, ἀμερῶς δὲ ἐκτείνοντα τὸ διαστατόν; καὶ οὐ δεῖ τοῦτο θαυμάζειν, εἴ τι ἀσώματον ὂν καὶ ἀδιάστατον ὑποστατικὸν εἴη τοῦδε τοῦ παντός· εἴπερ γὰρ τὸ σπέρμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τοσοῦτον ὄγκον ἔχον καὶ πάντας ἐν ἑαυτῷ τοὺς λόγους, ὑφίστησι τοσαύτας διαφορὰς (…) πολλῷ δὴ οὖν μᾶλλον ὁ δημιουργικὸς λόγος τὰ πάντα παράγειν δύναται **μηδὲν εἰς τὸ εἶναι τῆς ὕλης δεηθείς**, ὥσπερ ὁ τοῦ σπέρματος· ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἔξω ὕλης, ὁ δὲ τῶν πάντων ὑποστάτης ἐν ἑαυτῷ διαιωνίως ἕστηκε **καὶ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ μένοντος τὰ πάντα παρήγαγε.**

> establishes this by several arguments. Even craftsmen need tools for their activity because they do not have mastery over all their material (ὕλη). They show this by using tools to make their material easy to use by drilling, planing, or turning it, all of which operations do not insert a form, but eliminate the inappropriateness of what is to receive the form.

Here, we have proof that it was Porphyry, not Syrianus[73] or Proclus,[74] who was the originator of the notion of creation by being alone (αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι), which he linked to the notion of instantaneous creation. His basic argument is by analogy: human craftsmen need tools and time to use them only because the material on which they have to work presents obstacles which require preparation such as drilling or planing: once this preparatory work is completed, the form is instantaneously communicated to the object on which they were working. If there were no such obstacles, all of which are due to matter, a craftsman could instantly insert the form present in his mind into the object of his labors. But this is the case for the Demiurge: having no need for matter, he has no need of time or tools, but produces the world instantaneously, by thinking alone (αὐτῷ τῷ νοεῖν in this fragment corresponds nicely to ἅμα νοήματι in the one cited previously).

There is, moreover, another parallel worth citing. With Porphyry's remarks about the Demiurge's lack of need for tools, one may compare the following passage from the *Theology of Aristotle* X.190, p. 163:

> … when craftsmen wish to fashion a thing (…) when they work they work with their hands and other instruments whereas when the Creator wishes to make something (…) He does not need any instrument in the origination of things (*fī-ibdāʿ l-ašyāʾ*) because he is the cause of instruments, it being he that originated them.

5 Conclusion

Let me summarize and try to be clear about exactly what my claim is.

I believe the *Plotiniana Arabica* in general, and the *Theology of Aristotle* in particular, may preserve traces of Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα on Plotinus' *Enneads*, which are otherwise lost.

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73 As asserted by D'Ancona 1999a, n. 49; D'Ancona 2000, p. 94.

74 Cf. D'Ancona 1995, p. 82, n. 37.

Of the themes we have studied that are present in the *Plotiniana Arabica* but absent from Plotinus, some, as D'Ancona has emphasized, are attested or approximated in the Pseudo-Dionysius, others in Philoponus. But *all* the themes we have examined are attested for Porphyry, who was active two centuries prior than they. Most importantly, it is Porphyry, not Dionysius or Philoponus, to whom the authorship of the *Theology of Aristotle* is attributed in the work's prologue. It is Porphyry, not Dionysius or Philoponus, who, as D'Ancona has proved, is the likely author of the *ru'ūs al masā'il* preserved in the second part of the *Theology of Aristotle*. And it is Porphyry, not Dionysius or Philoponus, who we know, from his testimony, was the author of ὑπομνήματα on the *Enneads*.[75]

It remains possible, of course that the *Theology of Aristotle*'s attribution to Porphyry may be the result of some misunderstanding or series of misunderstandings, and that the Adaptor derived these doctrines from his readings of Dionysius, Philoponus, and perhaps other sources unknown to us. Yet it seems more economical to take the *Theology of Aristotle*'s prologue at face value, and suppose that these doctrines, all attested for Porphyry, were indeed found in a commentary or commentaries by Porphyry on the *Enneads* of Plotinus, which have disappeared in Greek, leaving behind only the faintest of traces. As far as the Prologue's attribution to Aristotle, rather than Plotinus, is concerned: rather than representing some unlikely error, this is almost certainly the result of deliberate pseudigraphy. Assuming the Adaptor and/or the editor (al-Kindī) knew that the Greek text they were translating was by Plotinus, not Aristotle, the decision to attribute the text to the First Master will have been motivated by the same concerns that motivated all the many pseudepigraphic attributions in Arabic-language philosophical literature. The name and identity of Plotinus was virtually unknown in the Arab-speaking world,[76] so that it was standard practice for an editor such as Kindī, anxious to ensure the authoritative reception of this his work, to attibute it to the most prestigious sage among the Greeks.[77]

My claim is not, course, that the *Theology of Aristotle* represents a word-for-word translation of Porphyry's commentaries, with nothing omitted and no

75 This last point renders it superfluous, in my view, to speculate on Porphyrian works other than these ὑπομνήματα as possible sources of the non-Plotinian material in the *Theology of Aristotle*.

76 Cf. Chase 2019, p. 601 n. 68.

77 The list of works attributed pseudonymously to Aristotle and/or Alexander of Aphrodisias in Arabic philosophical literature is, of course, lengthy indeed. They include a great deal of material that in fact derives from Proclus (see Endress 1973 and the discussions in Kraye et al., eds., 1986, *passim*) or John Philoponus (see Hasnawi 1994).

extraneous material added. Instead, the Arabic adaptor may have worked from a Greek manuscript of the *Enneads* which contained Porphyry's ὑπομνήματα, perhaps written in the margin surrounding the text. These ὑπομνήματα took the form of explanatory paraphrases on passages from some of the *Enneads*, in which Porphyry provided explanations of texts which he had been asked by his collegues to explain. Ibn Nāʿima will have duly translated both Plotinus' text and Porphyry's commentary,[78] similar to the way Boethius' logical writings have been surmised to derive, at least in part, from the scholia in the margins of manuscripts of Aristotle's *Organon* and Porphyry's *Isagoge*.[79] An editor, probably al-Kindī, then went over the result, adding Islamic formulae, changing the sense of some passages in a more monotheist, creationist direction, and providing transitional phases to link the various sections. The editor is probably responsible for the current structure of the *Theology of Aristotle*, which appears at first glance to be chaotic, but nevertheless, as C. D'Ancona has shown, does present signs of coherent structure. It is not impossible that the choice of passages from the *Enneads* translated in the *Theology of Aristotle* may be due to the fact that it was these passages that Porphyry chose to comment upon,[80] since his companions found them especially difficult.

I believe that this reconstruction of matters, while far from certain, provides at least a possible explanation of the genesis of the *Plotiniana Arabica*. The arguments against the Porphyrian hypothesis, based largely on *argumenta e silentio*, are not definitive, while the large number of Porphyrian parallels we find throughout the *Theology of Aristotle* provide reason for taking seriously the attribution of the *Theology of Aristotle*, at least in some sense, to the Tyrian Neoplatonist.

78 H. Dörrie 1976, p. 28–29 suggests a similar phenomenon occurred in the Latin world. In Porphyry's "edition with commentary" (*kommentierte Ausgabe*) of Plotinus, individual phrases of Plotinus were interwoven with Porphyry's commentary in such a way that readers such as Augustine and Ambrose were unable to distinguish Plotinus' thought from that of Porphyry. As we have seen, Dörrie suggests that even Gregory of Nyssa, although he had no need of translation, viewed Plotinus through a Porphyrian lens, as it were.

79 Shiel 1958. For discussion of the pros and contras of this hypothesis, cf. Militello 2010, p. 23–24.

80 Cf. the text from Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* ch. 26, cited above, n. 14: "and we have written commentaries *on some of them* [sc., of the *Enneads*] without any order (καταβεβλήμεθα δὲ καὶ εἴς τινα αὐτῶν ὑπομνήματα ἀτάκτως)".

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CHAPTER 8

Plotinus Arabus and *Proclus Arabus* in the *Harmony of the Two Philosophers* Ascribed to al-Fārābī

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As its title implies, the so-called *Theology of Aristotle* circulated as a work by Aristotle in the Arabic-speaking world.[1] In fact though, it is a partial Arabic translation of the last three *Enneads*, the collection of Plotinus' treatises put together by his student and editor Porphyry. Though it is generally accepted that the *Theology* was a major source for Neoplatonic ideas in the Islamic world, much research remains to be done in discovering when and by whom it was read, and how exactly it was used by later readers. This paper will deal with the earliest, and perhaps most famous, allusion to the *Theology* in a philosophical work. It comes in the *Harmony of the Two Sages*, the two sages in question being Plato and Aristotle.[2] The concern of the author, who according to the manuscript tradition is none other than al-Fārābī, is to dispel a widespread impression that Plato and Aristotle conflict in their teachings. While admitting that there are important differences between the two, not least in their mode of exposition and philosophical method, the author wants to say that their doctrines are in fundamental agreement. He refers, more than once, to the *Theology* in an effort to make this case.

Both the *Theology* and the *Harmony* have been intensively studied in recent years. Leading the way on the *Theology* has been Cristina D'Ancona, who has also written an interesting piece on the harmony between Plato and Aristotle in Arabic philosophy, among other significant article-length studies related to our

1 For a previous study of the text, in which I do not say much about the *Harmony*, see Adamson 2002.

2 I will cite from section numbers in the edition of Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī, *L'Harmonie entre les opinions de Platon et d'Aristote, texte et traduction*, ed. and trans. F.W. Najjar, D. Mallet (= NM). I have also consulted the superior edition in al-Fārābī, *L'armonia delle opinioni dei due sapienti il divino Platone et Aristotele*, ed. and trans. C. Martini Bonadeo (= MB). For an English translation, which uses the NM section numbers, see *Alfarabi. The Political Writings, "Selected Aphorisms" and Other Texts*, transl. C.E. Butterworth.

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theme.[3] Then there is an improved edition of the *Harmony* along with Italian translation, and extensive notes, by Cecilia Martini Bonadeo. These studies add significantly to our understanding of both texts. The following is to a large extent just a footnote to their work and the scholarship of others, especially Fritz Zimmermann and Gerhard Endress.

I have two broad goals. First, I will try to explain the rather complicated textual situation surrounding this appeal to the Platonism of Aristotle's *Theology* in the *Harmony of the Two Sages*. This situation can be summed up as follows: not only is the *Theology* not by Aristotle, but the text to which the *Harmony* is referring is not the *Theology of Aristotle* as we know it, and the *Harmony* itself may not be by al-Fārābī either. My hope is that it may be useful to offer an overview of this messy philological context, even if I do not have much of substance to add to what has been established in the aforementioned studies. My second, and hopefully more original task will be to answer the following question: how exactly do the citations of the *Theology* help the author of the *Harmony* to make his case? As we'll see, there is more to this question than meets the eye. It is not simply a matter of making Aristotle into a (Neo-)Platonist. For, with his confident ascription of the *Theology* to Aristotle, the author of the *Harmony* runs a significant risk of making Aristotle disagree not just with Plato, but with himself.

1 The Texts

First then let us turn to the textual situation, beginning with the question of the authenticity of the *Harmony*. Though, as already noted, the work is ascribed to al-Fārābī in the manuscripts, this authorship has been doubted, especially by Joep Lameer and Marwan Rashed.[4] Their objections are based on both style and content; of these the latter seem the more significant to me, given that there is a degree of stylistic variation within the undisputed Farabian corpus. Lameer lists a number of apparent philosophical errors in the *Harmony*, while Rashed mounts a case that the very thesis of the harmony between Plato and Aristotle, along with other doctrines in the text, would fit better with the group surrounding the Christian thinker Ibn ʿAdī. For instance, al-Fārābī would not, like the author of the *Harmony*, accept that providence concerns particulars, did not think that God wills the world to exist with a first moment in time, and was well aware that Aristotle rejects the Platonic theory of Forms.

3 Plotino, *La discesa dell'anima nei corpi* (*IV 8*[*6*]); D'Ancona 2006.

4 Lameer 1994; Rashed 2009.

Possible answers to these concerns have been offered by Mallet, Najjar, Genequand, Martini and (in a preface to Martini's edition) Gerhard Endress. One proposal is that differences between the *Harmony* and the rest of the Farabian corpus could be explained if we said that the *Harmony* is an early, even juvenile, work. Endress thus suggests that it could be one of his first writings, a proposal which has more recently been echoed by Damien Janos.[5] On this interpretation, the *Harmony* might well manifest an understanding of Plato and Aristotle, and an approach to various philosophical questions, that the mature al-Fārābī came to reject. On the other hand, the text refers back to numerous previous writings, which suggests that our author is well launched onto his career. But on the bright side, from the authenticity point of view, one such back-reference is to a commentary by the author on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. As Martini points out, al-Fārābī is one of the few to have written such a commentary in Arabic.

I will not argue for any firm view about authenticity here, but would like to make some suggestions regarding the intellectual profile and approach of our author. It does not seem to me that the *Harmony* was, as Lameer suggests, written by someone who is philosophically amateurish. However, it does seem to be written by someone who is reluctant to delve too far into the subject-matter and display his full understanding of the issues at stake. A crucial theme that runs throughout the work is the contrast—so familiar from Quranic exegesis—between the outer and inner meaning of a text, the *ẓāhir* and the *bāṭin*.[6] The author freely admits that Plato and Aristotle *seem* to disagree, so that there is a superficial disharmony between the two. His main aim is to reveal that this is indeed just an appearance, *ẓāhir* rather than *bāṭin*. Another repeated refrain is that the author aims at brevity. This is of course a common trope in Arabic philosophical literature, often enough found in very long-winded texts. But the *Harmony* is not a long-winded text. It offers only cursory treatment of a large number of complicated philosophical issues. We need not suppose that the author is dropping hints for the initiated reader while trying to leave everyone else in the dark. My point is rather that the author's goal will be satisfied if he can undermine what he sees as a superficial interpretation, according to which Plato and Aristotle disagree on fundamental philosophical topics. For this purpose, it is enough for him to challenge the disharmony reading, and then merely to gesture at the fuller story of their harmony. Spelling out that story in each case would exceed the bounds of his brief.

5 Janos 2009.

6 For an example, see the text cited below, p. 185.

This pattern is well illustrated by the notorious passage in which our author refers to the authenticity of the *Theology* to establish that Aristotle did believe in Forms, despite his attack on that doctrine in the *Metaphysics*:

> We find Aristotle, in his book on Lordship known as the *Theology*, affirming the spiritual Forms and stating clearly that they exist in the world of Lordship. If these statements are taken at face value, then one of three things must be the case: either they are contradictory, some of them are [really] by Aristotle and others not, or they have meanings and interpretations that bring their inner teachings (*bawāṭin*) into agreement, and in the process allow their outer statements (*ẓawāhir*) to concur.[7] Thinking that Aristotle, despite his proficiency and intense vigilance, and the sublimity of these objects, that is, the spiritual Forms, would contradict himself within a single science, namely the science of Lordship, is implausible and repugnant. But the idea that some of [the statements] are Aristotle's and others not is still more implausible, since the books that include these statements are too widely known (*ashhar*) for any of them to be thought inauthentic. It remains only that they have interpretations and meanings that, once revealed, will eliminate doubt and confusion.
>
> *Harmony*, NM § 66; MB 68–69 = T1

Views on this passage diverge sharply. Some, like Miriam Galston and Charles Butterworth, think that the author is well aware that Aristotle did not write the *Theology*. Butterworth goes so far as to remark, "he must surely have known [it] to be spurious." Galston likewise finds it incredible that al-Fārābī, of all people, would sincerely appeal to a widely shared opinion to secure the authenticity of the work. But Martini, rightly I think, dismisses this "dissimulation" reading.[8] She also makes the good point that in principle at least, the authenticity of the *Metaphysics* is just as much in question here as that of the *Theology*.

However, the passage clearly involves a tacit admission that someone *might* worry about the authenticity of one or the other text. If so, it is of course the *Theology* that stands under suspicion, not the *Metaphysics*. This suggests that, like Avicenna, who will later remark that there is "some doubt" about the work,[9] the author realizes the ascription is not beyond dispute. Yet he feels free to dis-

7 This follows M. Bonadeo in retaining the reading of Najjar, and not the alternative reading adopted by Butterworth. M. Bonadeo translates "e grazie a questo queste affermazioni divengono compatibili anche con il loro senso apparente."

8 Transl. M. Bonadeo 2008, p. 216.

9 In his *Letter to Kiyā*, translated in Gutas 1988, p. 63.

miss the problem in a rather casual manner. Of course, it fits his purpose to consider the *Theology* as authentic. After all, his point in citing it is to undermine the widespread impression that Aristotle is a critic of Plato (as he says at the beginning of the work, §1, referring to "most people nowadays," *akthar ahl zamāninā*). People who think this are, he assumes, also likely to accept the authenticity of the *Theology*, because it is so "famous."[10] Whether the *Theology* is really by Aristotle is, in a sense, neither here nor there. The point is to expose an incoherence in the superficial approach to the two philosophers that he is trying to undermine. This rival approach takes at face value evidence in the *Metaphysics* showing that Aristotle rejected the theory of Forms. Yet, our author assumes, its proponents will also admit that Aristotle wrote the *Theology*, which emphatically accepts the existence of Forms. As the author himself points out, this shifts the dilemma: we should not worry so much about Aristotle's disagreement with Plato, as about Aristotle's disagreement with Aristotle. His solution to that new dilemma remains tacit in this section of the *Harmony*, or so I shall argue below. For now, I just want to point out that invoking the *Theology* serves a rather modest aim, namely to problematize the superficial disharmony thesis, and to suggest that an alternative interpretation is necessary, even if no such interpretation is given here in full.

This brings us to the question of why our author would think in the first place that the *Theology* is by Aristotle, and even think that it is *famously* a work by Aristotle. Obviously, this statement presupposes that the *Theology* is already circulating under Aristotle's name, so we can rule out that the *Harmony* itself played a key role in generating the pseudonymous attribution, though it may have helped to perpetuate that attribution. To make a long story short, the most likely explanation would instead seem to be the one offered by Zimmermann, namely that a prologue attached to the *Theology* gave readers the impression that what followed was an Aristotelian work.[11] The prologue seeks to situate the teachings found in the *Theology* within the framework of Aristotle's philosophy, and this misled subsequent readers and scribes into thinking that Aristotle was actually the author of the text.

Here we come to a further issue, and one that will provide the answer to a still further question that may be on some readers' minds: what is this paper about the *Theology of Aristotle* doing in a book on the reception of Proclus? The

10 As M. Bonadeo suggests translating *ashhar*, criticizing Galston's rendering "generally accepted."

11 Zimmerman 1986, p. 110–240. However in his "Proclus Arabus Rides Again," Zimmermann presents evidence that the Kindī circle could have been responsible for mislabeling the treatises gathered in the collection known as the *Theology*.

answer is that, on Zimmermann's account, the prologue was appended not just to the Arabic translation of Plotinus, or some version thereof, but to a whole *collection* of texts (a so-called "metaphysics file") that included Arabic versions of writings by Proclus and Alexander of Aphrodisias.[12] In particular, it included a partial Arabic translation of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* (= ET). A star witness in Zimmermann's case for this conclusion is none other than the *Harmony*. In the section of the work devoted to showing that Plato and Aristotle agreed in upholding the world's atemporal creation from nothing, the author of the *Harmony* appeals to the *Theology* in the following terms:

> Whoever looks into his [sc. Aristotle's] statements about Lordship in the book known as the *Theology* will be in no doubt as to his affirming the Maker and Originator for this world. This is so evident in those statements that it can't be overlooked. There, he shows that the Creator, the exalted, originated matter from nothing, and that it became bodily thanks to the Creator, great be His praise, and from His will; and then it was put in order. He has shown too, in the *Physics*, that the universe cannot have come to be through chance and coincidence, and likewise in *On Heaven and the World*. He proves this on the basis of the astounding mutual arrangement found in the parts of the world. He has there explained the topic of causes, how many they are, and established the agent cause. Also he has explained there the source of generation and motion, and that it is neither generated nor moved. Just as Plato, in his book called *Timaeus*, showed that everything that is generated is necessarily generated from a cause that generates it, and that what is generated is not a cause for its own generation [i.e. the generative cause must be something else, not the thing itself], so Aristotle showed in his book *Theology* that unity exists in every multiplicity [cf. *Elements of Theology* § 1], because any multiplicity in which no unity exists would be utterly infinite. He provided clear demonstrations for this, as when he says that every one of the parts of the multiple is either one or not one; but if it is not one, it must be either multiple, or nothing. But if it is nothing, then no multiplicity can be assembled from it; and if it is multiple, then what is the difference between it and multiplicity? From this it also follows that the infinite is greater than the infinite. Furthermore, he shows that anything in this world that has unity in it is both one and not one, in different respects [cf. *Elements of Theology* § 2]. If then it is not truly (*fī l-ḥaqīqati*) one,

12 Zimmermann 1986, p. 131.

> but rather, unity [merely] exists in it, then unity is different from it and it is different from unity [cf. *Elements of Theology* § 3–4]. Again, he shows that the True One is that which gives unity to other existing things. Again, he shows that the multiple is doubtless posterior to the one, and the one prior to the multiple [cf. *Elements of Theology* § 5]. Again, he shows that every multiplicity that is near to the True One is less multiple than the one that is further away from it, and vice-versa.
>
> *Harmony* NM § 56; MB 64–65 = T2

As my bracketed insertions show, the author is clearly thinking not of anything in Plotinus, but of the opening propositions of the *Elements of Theology*. This was already noted by Endress in his *Proclus Arabus*, who remarked that our passage "nahezu wörtlich aus unserer Version von propp. 1–3 zitiert." I actually see allusions to propositions 4 and 5 as well. The last sentence is more difficult to anchor securely in any particular source. The "closer and further away" idea may however be from *Elements of Theology* § 25: ἐγγυτέρω τἀγαθοῦ as opposed to πορρώτερον (see also § 28, § 62). To this we can add that the reference to Forms in T1 can also be linked to the Arabic Proclus—specifically, to the Arabic versions of § 15–17, which are the very propositions that follow the first five propositions in the manuscript studied by Endress. The upshot is that when the author of the *Harmony* refers to "the *Theology*," we should take him to be alluding not to the *Theology of Aristotle* as we think of it—a partial version of the Arabic translation of Plotinus produced in al-Kindī's circle—but rather to a perhaps larger text which in any case included material from the Arabic version of Proclus' *Elements*.

2 The Use of Proclus in the *Harmony*: Creation

So much for the historical circumstances surrounding these notorious allusions to the *Theology* in the *Harmony* ascribed to al-Fārābī. Now let us turn to a rather different question: why exactly does the author of the *Harmony* think that these allusions can help him to establish a fundamental agreement between Plato and Aristotle? As I've already noted, this move is in a way obvious, and in another way deeply problematic. Obvious because a Neoplatonic Aristotle is an Aristotle who may be much more easily reconciled with Plato, but deeply problematic because a Neoplatonic Aristotle is one that will be difficult to reconcile with Aristotle's other writings. Given that our interest here is the reception of Proclus and not Plotinus, I will approach this problem by looking at a section of the *Harmony* that seems to be based on the Arabic version of

the *Elements of Theology*, passing over the verbatim quotation from the Arabic Plotinus (at N/M § 75; MB 74).

The section of the *Harmony* featuring T2, which represents the work's clearest dependence on the Arabic Proclus, is devoted to the question of "the universe's being eternal or created, and whether it has a maker who is its efficient cause, or not" (N/M § 53; MB 63). It may seem that Aristotle denies this, given that he mentions the eternity of the universe as a disputed issue in the *Topics*,[13] and clearly states in *On the Heavens* that "the universe has no temporal beginning (*laysa la-hu badʿ zamānī*)" (N/M § 55; MB 63). The so-called *Theology* is then invoked in T2 to provide contrary evidence, to show that Aristotle did indeed believe in a maker for the universe and denied its eternity. But why is the material from the *Theology*, which here means the Arabic Proclus, even relevant? It seems surprising, not to say perverse, that he should choose to cite of all people Proclus, author of the set of eternalist arguments that provoked one of Philoponus' two polemics on the issue. Damien Janos has urged us to see the *Harmony* within the context of the Christian philosophers of Baghdad, who may have been under the influence of those very polemics of Philoponus.[14]

Persuasive though Janos' point may be, it does not answer the question of why the author of the *Harmony* should have thought it useful to cite the *Theology* at this juncture in his argument. It may seem that an easy answer is available. As we just saw, this part of the *Harmony* is framed as answering a two-part question: not only whether the universe is eternal, but also whether it has a "maker (*ṣāniʿ*)" and "efficient cause (*ʿilla fāʿila*)." While the Arabic Plotinus and Proclus offer no help to the author on the first issue, they are unambiguously helpful on the second. The Arabic Plotinus and *Liber de causis* both speak of "creation (*ʿibdā*),"[15] and the opening propositions of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* that lie behind T2 make the First Principle a cause for all things. The identity between Aristotle's God and this First Principle, a "true One" who is the source of all unity, is then secured with a reference to *Metaphysics* book Lambda which, our author tells us, "proves the unity (*waḥdāniyya*) of the Cre-

13 Later this same passage from the *Topics* will be cited by Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas to cast doubt on Aristotle's commitment to eternalism (see e.g. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I Q 46 a.1 resp.). Notice that for the author of the *Harmony*, it plays the very different function of casting doubt on Aristotle's commitment to *creationism*.

14 Janos 2009, p. 6. Unlike Rashed, who has also pointed out resonances between the ideas of Ibn ʿAdī and the *Harmony*, Janos thinks this may be made compatible with Farabian authorship. We need suppose only that the *Harmony* is an early work written while al-Fārābī was under the influence of his Christian teachers. See above for the difficulties of this chronological proposal.

15 Cf. Endress 1973, p. 209, 231.

ator" (N/M § 57; MB 65). His interest in God's agency is further demonstrated by an allusion to a lost work of Ammonius (known to us through a summary in Simplicius), which argued that Aristotle's divine principle is indeed an efficient cause (N/M § 58; MB 66).[16]

While this seems to exhaust the author's explicit rationale for citing the *Theology*, we should probe for a deeper explanation of its relevance. He needn't paraphrase the first several propositions of the *Elements of Theology* to make the point that the Neoplatonica Arabica accept a first causal principle. And of course, we have yet to understand the precise relationship between asserting such a causal principle and denying the eternity of the universe. As Janos has stressed, our author is not merely asserting that God is an efficient cause. Rather, God exercises a unique form of efficient causality, capable of creating "without time (*bi-lā zamān*)" and without need for pre-existing matter.[17] These two features of divine causation are linked, according to the author of the *Harmony*. An agent who needs to act in time on pre-existing matter is an agent who performs a *motion*, whereas God does not move when He creates. Most people fail to understand this. They "conceive of the first originator as being a body, and acting through motion and in time," and "are incapable of understanding how something can come to be from nothing, or be corrupted into nothing" (N/M § 60–61; MB 67–68). Such naive conceptions of God are to be found in many religious accounts, which describe the world as being fashioned out of material constituents like water (N/M § 58; MB 66).

The author's goal then, is to show that Aristotle did not fall prey to these simple-minded notions. For this sake he can appeal to the idea that time is generated through celestial motion.[18] If God is responsible for causing this motion then He cannot be acting in time. This, of course, is what Aristotle meant in *On the Heavens* when he denied a *temporal* beginning of the universe—not that the universe has always existed, but that God's agency is timeless (N/M § 55; MB 64). The author can also appeal to the sequence of argument set forth by Proclus, and cited in T2. "Aristotle" here makes God, as a source of unity, prior to *all* multiplicity. Motion is multiple, which is precisely why it generates time,

16 Simplicius, *In Phys.*, 1361–1363, in Sorabji 2004, 8(c). In another example of the way the author of the *Harmony* declines to go into detail, he says there is no need to present Ammonius' case in any detail "due to its fame (*shuhra*)." Compare this also to the remark about the notoriety of the *Theology* in T1.

17 Janos 2009, p. 3. These two features of divine creation are the same ones stressed by al-Kindī at *On the Quantity of Aristotle's Books* § VI.8, transl. Adamson, Pormann 2012.

18 The Aristotelian pedigree of celestial motion in particular as the source of time is provided by Alexander of Aphrodisias. See *Maqālat al-Iskandar al-Afrūdīsī fī l-zamān*, p. 19–24, at 21. Trans. in Sharples 1982.

unfolding "part by part."[19] This is emphasized in the author's account of God's timeless causation:

> The meaning of his saying that the world has no temporal beginning is that it is not generated one part after another (*awwalan fa-awwalan bi-ajzā'ihi*) as, for instance, plants or animals are generated. For when something is generated one part after another, some of its parts precede others in time.
>
> N/M § 55; MB 64 = T3

Similarly, in T2 we were told that the *Theology* affirms the creation of matter from nothing. The thought here must be that matter is characterized by multiplicity, so that by showing the dependence and posteriority of all multiplicity on pure unity, Proclus has shown that matter cannot be independent of God's causation.

The *Harmony* also gives us an explanation for the methodological status of the argument found in the *Theology*. The author uses the metaphor of "ascending" from indubitable premises to establish a thesis. The metaphor is applied twice over (at N/M § 57; MB 65), first to describe the way that "Aristotle" goes on from the proof of true unity to "speak of the parts of the world, both bodily and spiritual," and how they were created; second, to describe the way that God's unity is established in the *Metaphysics*. In this way, even the characteristic "Euclidean" method of the *Elements of Theology* is situated within an Aristotelian framework. In the process, the author gives us a further clue as to why he cites the *Theology* so prominently: "Aristotle's" claims about the dependency of motion and matter on God are methodologically posterior to the more fundamental claim that God is a true One and source of all unity. Indeed, the timelessness of creation and the denial of pre-existing matter are nothing more than applications of the more general principle that whatever is many depends on the One.

From this it should be clear that the *Harmony* not only presents the *Theology* as being consistent with other works of Aristotle, but goes so far as to make it the key to his interpretation of those other works. It may seem that Aristotle is thus being "Platonized" so as to agree with the *Timaeus*. But actually, the reverse is true. It is rather the *Timaeus* that is assimilated to the doctrines of

19 Again, the idea that time is characteristic of God's multiple creation and not God as the True One is already found in al-Kindī. See his *On First Philosophy*, § I.5 (God is the "cause of time"), § VI.9 (time's connection to motion), § XIX.4 (God is not in motion).

the "Aristotle" who emerges from the author's reconciliation of the *Theology* to the *Metaphysics* and *On the Heavens*.[20] This is particularly clear from the way that Plato is said to deny the existence of matter prior to the creation of the universe. It's a rather surprising interpretive claim, since in the Islamic world Plato was frequently made a leading representative for the idea that the universe was fashioned with some first moment and from some pre-existing material. The *Harmony* simply assumes that the *Timaeus*' affirmation of a creator God rules this out, depending (as T2 shows) on the *Theology* to establish the correct meaning of terms like "creator" and "originator."

3 The Use of Proclus in the *Harmony*: Platonic Forms

Let us now move on to the issue of Platonic Forms, which provides the context for T2 and its allusion to the problem of the authenticity of the *Theology*. As usual in the *Harmony*, the author begins by setting out *prima facie* evidence of a disagreement between the two great sages. Here the problem is that in his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle makes clear his rejection of Plato's Forms (N/M § 65; MB 69). He cites as one problem raised by Aristotle the fact that there will be separate mathematical entities like surfaces and solids in addition to those we find in the sensible world. For this objection, scholars have cited *Metaphysics* A.9, B.2, Z.14, and M.2, all of which accuse Plato of effectively "duplicating" our world by positing another world of separate Forms. A somewhat less familiar idea found here in the *Harmony* is that Plato is committed to additional kinds of *knowledge* or *science* in the realm of the Forms. For in addition to the geometrical objects in that realm,

> there will be sciences (*ʿulūm*) there, like the sciences of the stars and the sciences of melodies, and of both composed and uncomposed sounds, and of medicine, geometry, of both rectilinear and curved magnitudes, and of hot and cold things and in general, active and passive qualities, and of universals and particulars and matters and forms.
>
> *Harmony* N/J § 65; MB 69 = T4

Now, it is true enough that on Aristotle's interpretation the Platonic theory makes Forms the objects of knowledge. This emerges not only from various

20 Here, I agree with Martini Bonadeo, who writes (p. 204–205) that the *Theology* is a key to resolve the apparent tension between *On the Heavens* and the *Timaeus*.

passages of the *Metaphysics* but also the little treatise *On Ideas* (*Peri Ideon*) preserved in Alexander's commentary on the *Metaphysics*.[21]

Here though, the *Harmony* is saying that there will actually be a science or knowledge that is itself a Form. This is less prominent in Aristotle's polemics, but can be found for instance at *Metaphysics* B.2, which tries to force on the Platonist a distinction between different kinds of medical sciences, one of which will be "medicine in itself" (997b28–30). The *Harmony*, typically enough, states that this consequence is ridiculous without really explaining why. In fact, the objection was already mentioned by Plato himself, indeed singled out as the greatest difficulty for the theory of Forms in the first part of the *Parmenides*. There, Plato has Parmenides warn that if knowledge is relational, and if Forms are related to one another and not to their participants, then Forms will be known only by the divine Form of Knowledge. In that case, neither will we mere humans be able to know Forms, nor will God have any knowledge of our world (*Parmenides* 133b–134e).

The reason I dwell on this is that it will, I think, help us to make sense of what happens in the *Harmony* following on the author's allusion to the *Theology*. I've already noted that that allusion seems to cause a problem, rather than solve one. Why would Aristotle critique the Forms in the *Metaphysics*, only to accept them in another work? It may seem that the author fails to address this question, or is even oblivious to it, given that he never returns to say anything about the *Metaphysics*. Instead, he seems to digress into a consideration of the general problem of describing God. In terms remarkably close to those used by al-Kindī and the texts produced in his circle, the author writes:

> Because the Creator is by his very being (*anniyya*) and essence distinct from all other things, and this in a more noble, excellent and elevated way, nothing relates to Him in His essence or shares anything in common with Him, or is like Him either strictly speaking (*ḥaqīqatan*) or metaphorically (*mujāzan*).
>
> *Harmony* N/J § 67; MB 70 = T5

He even marks the section from which this quotation is drawn as a kind of digression, as is clear from the sequel:

> Now let us return to where we left off and say: given that God, the exalted, is living, willing, and the originator of this world with all that is in

21 See Fine 1993, at 79–80 of the Greek text.

> it, is there any way to deny that the conditions for one who is alive and wills include forming a view (*taṣawwur*) on what one wills to do, and the presence of forms (*ṣuwar*) of what one wills to undertake in one's self (*dhāt*), may God be exalted above all comparison! Furthermore, because His essence is enduring with no change or alteration possible for Him, whatever is in His realm is likewise enduring without disappearance or alteration. If there were no forms and models for existing things in the essence of Him who is living, willing, and makes them exist, then what is it that He makes exist, and towards which pattern would He turn for whatever He acts and originates? Surely you know that whoever denies this idea in the case of the living, willing agent is forced to say that He brings things to be at random and foolishly, with no purpose and without turning towards any purpose intended by His choice. But this is most appalling.
>
> *Harmony* N/J § 68; MB 70 = T6

The author seems to be ignoring the points he has just made in the apparent "digression" at T5. Rather than scrupulously avoiding the ascription of any attribute to God, he insists that we *must* speak of the Creator as willing and knowing. This is why both Plato and the Aristotle of the *Theology* accept Forms: there must be divine knowledge, given that only a knowing agent could have created the universe we see around us, and if God has knowledge then there must be divine and paradigmatic Forms to serve as fit objects for that knowledge. How can the author say these things in light of the structures expressed in T5? Well, he has also admitted that we cannot avoid using language to describe God. When we do so, we apply "synonymous" language "in a more noble and elevated way."[22] For example, when we say that God is "alive" we mean "that He is alive in a more noble way than the one we know from any living thing lower than Him" (§ 67).

I would like to suggest that the juxtaposition of T5 and T6 is intended to echo the tension between Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and what our author knows as the *Theology of Aristotle*. On the one hand, Aristotle is well aware that strictly speaking, there can be no talk of knowledge, ideas, or Forms in God—since there can, strictly speaking, be no talk of God at all. But with this caveat in mind, we may allow ourselves to say (for instance) that God does have knowledge. It

22 See also § 70: "since necessity stands as an obstacle and intervenes between us and that, we limit ourselves to existing utterances, forcing ourselves to bear in mind that the divine meanings we express by means of these utterances are of a more venerable species and are other than we imagine and conceptualize" (transl. Butterworth).

is this less relaxed mode of discourse that Aristotle uses in his *Theology*. The solution works for the objects of knowledge as well as for knowledge itself. We cannot really affirm that there are separate mathematical objects like lines and surfaces apart from the ones we know—as Aristotle points out in the *Metaphysics*. Nonetheless, given that God was able to make things that have lines and surfaces, we should be prepared to admit, using language in a more extended fashion, that there are ideas of lines and surfaces in God's mind. As the author stresses (§ 69), this is very different from asserting that there are further realms akin to our universe, but populated with Forms instead of sensible objects. That position, the one critiqued in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, would compromise the transcendence of the divine by making the immaterial realm a mere duplicate of our own.

If this interpretation is correct, then it gives us an example of a pervasive feature of the *Harmony*, and one already noticed in the previous section of this paper, namely that tensions between Plato and Aristotle tend to be resolved by assimilating Plato to Aristotle rather than vice-versa.[23] When late ancient Platonists defended the harmony thesis, they usually did so by intimating that Plato grasped and presented higher truths than those found in Aristotle. Our author does the reverse. It is the Aristotle of the *Metaphysics* who wisely cautions us against simply postulating duplicates of sensible things in a divine realm. And it is the Aristotle of the *Theology* who tells us the sense in which separate Forms could, with all the caution due when attempting to describe God, be postulated nonetheless. Forms are present in the mind of the Creator insofar as He has knowledge about what He is to create.

The passage also bears out the observation I made above, that the author tends to stop short of a full accounting of the philosophical issues about which Plato and Aristotle disagree. While he sometimes suggests that he could indeed give such a full accounting if he were to go on at further length, in the present context he adds another reason for his limited ambition: the topic is just too difficult. Thus he says (§ 76 N/M; 75 MB) that as regards the question of higher principles and forms, establishing the inner harmony of Plato and Aristotle is *mumtani'*, a word whose semantic range stretches from "very difficult" (Najjar/Mallet's translation) to "impenetrable" (Martini Bonadeo's translation) to downright "impossible." Like most interpreters nowadays, I myself would agree with the strongest version of that sentiment. It is impossible to reconcile the

23 A particularly striking case is Plato's theory of recollection, which is assimilated to Aristotle's empiricist epistemology at § 51. My thanks to Hanif Amin Beidokhti for his observation about the text in general.

teachings of Plato and Aristotle on all these issues, and throwing the Arabic Plotinus and Proclus into the mix isn't liable to help matters. Still, one cannot blame the author of the *Harmony* for trying his best to do so. He is simply echoing a long-standing presumption among philosophers that these two sages must be in agreement. In his own way, he is pursuing the quintessentially Proclean project of drawing together what is diverse into a unity.

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CHAPTER 9

Les *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* d'al-ʿĀmirī et l'anonyme *Kitāb al-ḥaraka* : deux interprétations du *Liber de causis* en arabe

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Il y a plus de trente ans que la question de la datation du *Liber de causis* en arabe a été tranchée en faveur d'une période durant le neuvième siècle. Il était possible d'écarter l'hypothèse selon laquelle le *Liber de causis* datait du douzième siècle grâce à un texte d'Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-ʿĀmirī. Il s'agit d'une œuvre relativement courte de vingt chapitres intitulée *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* (*al-Fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim al-ilāhīya*) qui nous est parvenue dans un seul manuscrit tardif (XVII^e ou XVIII^e siècle) conservé aujourd'hui à Istanbul. Dans son article « An Unpublished Work by al-ʿĀmirī and the Date of the Arabic *De Causis* », Everett K. Rowson a démontré que ces *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* sont, en effet, une paraphrase très libre du *Liber de causis*[1]. Cette découverte a donné un *terminus ante quem* pour la datation du *Liber de causis*, à savoir avant la composition de l'œuvre d'al-ʿĀmirī au X^e siècle. La vie de l'auteur des *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* s'est déroulée, surtout au Khorasan, entre une date de naissance présumée vers 912 et une date certaine de mort en 992[2]. Le fait qu'al-ʿĀmirī était l'étudiant d'un maître lui-même ancien étudiant du premier philosophe des Arabes, al-Kindī indique, en plus, un chemin possible de la transmission du *Liber de causis* à notre savant du Khorasan. Car, comme l'a proposé Cristina d'Ancona[3], il semble que ce texte a été composé dans le cercle d'al-Kindī, voire par lui-même.

Les *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* présentent une hiérarchie ontologique qui est clairement néoplatonicienne et, dans sa relative simplicité, plutôt inspirée de Plotin que de Proclus. La caractéristique la plus exceptionnelle, qu'al-ʿĀmirī ajoute à cette doctrine de l'Antiquité tardive, est l'adéquation avec l'islam, c'est-à-dire que pour chaque niveau ontologique néoplatonicien, le savant du Khorasan donne un terme coranique. L'Un est, pour lui, le créateur

1 Rowson 1984.
2 Pour la biographie d'al-ʿĀmirī, voir Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim al-ilāhīya*, p. 8-34.
3 Pour la composition du *Liber de causis* dans le cercle d'al-Kindī, voir d'Ancona 1995.

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(*al-bāriʾ*) ; l'intellect universel est le calame (*al-qalam*) et les formes universelles sont le commandement (*al-amr*) ; l'âme universelle est la tablette (*al-lawḥ*) et la sphère la plus haute le trône (*al-ʿarš*)[4]. Nous lisons cette hiérarchie et sa correspondance coranique dans le deuxième chapitre des *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* comme lecture et interprétation du passage suivant du deuxième chapitre du *Liber de causis*[5] :

> Tout être véritable est :
> soit plus haut que **l'éternité et avant elle**,
> soit ensemble avec l'éternité,
> soit **après l'éternité** et au-dessus du **temps**.

Chez al-ʿĀmirī le passage correspondant se lit comme suit :

> Les choses dans la vérité de l'existence se divisent en cinq classes :
> – ce qui existe par l'essence qui est au-dessus de **l'éternité et avant elle** ;
> – ce qui existe par la *creatio ex nihilo* (*ibdāʿ*) qui est **avec l'éternité** et inséparable d'elle ;
> – ce qui existe par la création (*ḫalq*) qui est **après l'éternité** et avant **le temps** ;
> – ce qui existe par la soumission (*tasḫīr*) qui est avec le temps et inséparable de lui ;
> – et ce qui existe par l'engendrement (*tawlīd*) qui est après le temps et le suivant.
>
> Nous expliquons 'la soumission (*tasḫīr*)' par l'expression 'le façonnement (*ṭabʿ*)' et 'l'engendrement (*tawlīd*)' par l'expression 'la formation (*takwīn*)'. Ce qui existe par l'essence est le créateur (*al-bāriʾ*) – Sa mention soit exaltée. Ce qui existe par la *creatio ex nihilo* (*ibdāʿ*) est le calame (*al-qalam*) et le commandement (*al-amr*). Ce qui existe par la création (*ḫalq*) est la tablette (*al-lawḥ*) et le trône (*al-ʿarš*). Ce qui existe par la soumission (*tasḫīr*) sont les sphères qui tournent et les corps fondamentaux. Ce qui existe par l'engendrement (*tawlīd*) est tout ce qui est formé par les quatre éléments. Chez les philosophes le calame est expliqué par l'expression 'l'intellect universel', le commandement est expliqué par 'les formes uni-

4 Les versets du coran sont 30, 55 (*al-bāriʾ*) ; 68, 1 et 96, 4 (*al-qalam*) ; 7, 54 ; 28, 44 ; 30, 4 ; 82, 19 et *passim* (*al-amr*) ; 85, 22 (*al-lawḥ*) ; 7, 54 ; 9, 129 ; 10, 3 ; 11, 7 ; 13, 2 ; 17, 42 ; 20, 5 ; 21, 22 ; 23, 86 et 116 ; 25, 59 ; 27, 26 ; 32, 4 ; 39, 75 ; 40, 7 et 15 ; 43, 82 ; 57, 4 ; 69, 17 ; 81, 20 ; et 85, 15 (*al-ʿarš*).

5 Pour le texte arabe, voir Badawī ²1977, p. 4-5. Les parallèles littéraux entre les deux textes sont indiqués en caractères gras.

> verselles', la tablette est expliquée par l'expression 'l'âme universelle' et le trône est expliqué quant à lui par l'expression 'la sphère droite' et 'la sphère des sphères'[6].

Pour bien intégrer sa hiérarchie ontologique et ses cinq degrés dans la doctrine du *Liber de causis*, al-ʿĀmirī traite le temps comme le *Liber de causis* traite l'éternité et distingue des niveaux ontologiques en-dessus, avec et en-dessous du temps. De cette façon-là, il arrive aux deux degrés additionnels qui lui ont manqué dans le chapitre de sa source, car il identifie le premier niveau lié au temps, c'est-à-dire le degré avant le temps avec le dernier niveau lié à l'éternité.

Une autre innovation, qui mérite aussi d'être mentionnée, est le fait que le savant du Khorasan applique un terme différent pour le processus de création et de formation à chacun de ses degrés ontologiques. Ainsi, tout ce qui existe reste directement dépendant de Dieu, qui est le seul créateur. Selon le modèle néoplatonicien de l'émanation, notre philosophe accepte, quand même, que les degrés supérieurs prennent une certaine part dans la formation des degrés inférieurs ; c'est-à-dire que l'intellect soit impliqué dans la formation de l'âme, et que ces deux le soient dans la formation des sphères, et ainsi de suite. Al-ʿĀmirī décrit cela comme suit :

> L'essence de quelque chose créée *ex nihilo* (*mubdaʿ*) a sa subsistance par l'essence pure du Créateur (*al-mubdiʿ*). L'essence de quelque chose créée (*maḫlūq*) subsiste – si elle subsiste – par le Créateur et a une part de la nature de ce créé que le Créateur a fait exister devant elle. Ce qui existe par la soumission (*musaḫḫar*) subsiste – s'il subsiste – aussi par le Créateur et a une part des natures de ceux deux existants avant lui, c'est-à-dire le créé *ex nihilo* et le créé. L'engendré (*muwallad*) a une part des natures de ces trois existants avant lui, c'est-à-dire le créé *ex nihilo*, le créé et ce qui existe par la soumission[7].

En ce qui concerne la structure de notre paraphrase, nous voyons que les huit premiers chapitres des *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* paraphrasent les neuf premiers chapitres du *Liber de causis*, à l'exclusion du chapitre cinq. Des autres chapitres du *Liber de causis*, nous trouvons encore les chapitres 11 (?), 12, 16, 18-26, 29-30, 31 (?) dont quelques-uns sont largement paraphrasés, d'autres seulement de façon très limitée – c'est-à-dire que seulement quelques lignes

6 Pour le texte arabe, voir Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim al-ilāhīya*, p. 84-86.

7 Pour le texte arabe, voir Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim al-ilāhīya*, p. 100-102.

d'un chapitre sont paraphrasées. Généralement, nous pouvons constater que la majorité du matériel du *Liber de causis* est présentée dans la paraphrase d'al-ʿĀmirī et soumise à une transformation islamique. Le savant du Khorasan se montre, alors, partisan fidèle du programme du maître de son maître al-Balḫī, à savoir le philosophe al-Kindī mentionné ci-dessus, qui a œuvré pour réconcilier la philosophie grecque avec l'Islam.

Il reste pourtant deux questions : pourquoi al-ʿĀmirī n'indique-t-il nulle part qu'il paraphrase un texte donné ? La seconde question est liée à la première, et peut paraître surprenante au vu de ce nous avons évoqué précédemment : quelle est la source directe de notre philosophe ?

Une réponse à la première question pourrait être donnée par deux positions opposées, à savoir en disant que sa source était tellement connue, bien diffusée et présente qu'al-ʿĀmirī a supposé que ses lecteurs reconnaitraient cette source ; ou, au contraire, que sa source était si difficile d'accès qu'il n'a vu ni le sens ni la nécessité de la mentionner. La seconde question se pose, parce qu'il a existé, en arabe, plus que la version du *Liber de causis* qui a été traduite en latin. Ce qui est conservé et connu aujourd'hui, à l'exception du modèle de la traduction latine, est une deuxième version du *Liber de causis* découverte par Saleh Oudaimah et publiée dans une traduction française par ce dernier et Pierre Thillet en 2002 dans un article intitulé « Proclus Arabe. Un nouveau *Liber de causis* ? ». Ce texte, nommé *Liber de causis II*, contient, en 29 chapitres, 30 propositions des *Éléments de théologie* de Proclus dont vingt-cinq se trouvent aussi dans le *Liber de causis*, deux dans le *Proclus Arabus*, une dans le *Kitāb al-Ḥaraka* – que nous discuterons plus tard – et deux se trouvent uniquement dans le *Liber de causis II*. Une particularité, qui mérite d'être mentionnée, réside dans le fait que la proposition 134 des *Éléments de théologie* est reprise deux fois dans le *Liber de causis II*, à savoir dans les chapitres 13 et 29. Cette proposition proclienne se trouve aussi dans le *Liber de causis*, dans le chapitre 22. Le résultat très surprenant d'une comparaison de ces trois versions différentes de la proposition 134 démontre qu'elles sont plus au moins indépendantes l'une de l'autre avec quelques similarités entre n'importe lesquelles des deux versions à l'exclusion de la troisième.

Un passage de la paraphrase d'al-ʿĀmirī, qui ne s'explique pas par le *Liber de causis* dans sa forme actuelle, pourrait très bien paraphraser le *Liber de causis II*, plus précisément la deuxième moitié du chapitre 16 :

> A donc été expliqué et rendu clair ce dont nous avons fait mention que tout créé est une substance qui est soumise au **temps**, ainsi les corps créés, simples et composés, et que ces derniers **dépendent des corps célestes**

> dont la substance est au-dessus du temps et dont l'acte est soumis au temps. Quant aux **corps célestes**, ils dépendent des substances qui sont au-dessus d'eux également au-dessus du temps, et ce sont **les formes séparées**. Les formes séparées dépendent de la durée, et la durée dépend de **la cause première** qui est cause de la durée et des autres choses, et toutes les choses, créées, pures et viles dépendent de la cause première.
>
> tr. OUDAIMAH et THILLET 2001-2002, p. 336

Les aspects particuliers de cette version arabe de la proposition 107 de Proclus, qui ne figurent pas dans le chapitre correspondant (31) du *Liber de causis*, sont les corps célestes, les formes séparées et la cause première. L'occurrence de ces aspects, reformulés, chez al-ʿĀmirī constitue, en ce qui concerne cette proposition proclienne, une proximité avec le *Liber de causis II*[8], à l'exclusion du *Liber de causis*. Voici le passage dans *Les Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques*, ch. 19 :

> Donc la période de survie des substances, qui n'ont pas de permanence dans le **temps**, c'est-à-dire les engendrés comme les existants inférieurs, **dépend des corps élevés**. […]
>
> […] Quant aux substances dont la permanence est temporelle, c'est-à-dire les existants qui sont créés pour être soumis (*tasḫīrī*) comme **les corps supérieurs**, leur perfection sont **les formes** dont l'essence est dans le domaine de l'éternité et dont les actes sont dans le domaine du temps. […]
>
> […] Alors la permanence [de l'âme] est ainsi dépendante de sa perfection, c'est-à-dire l'intellect, comme la permanence de l'intellect est ⟨dépendante⟩ du fait qu'il se consacre au contact avec l'essence de son **Créateur, le Vrai**[9].

Si nous regardons les deux textes et l'interprétation et la lecture que notre philosophe donne de son modèle, nous remarquons pourtant quelques différences. Il y a cinq niveaux différents distingués dans les deux passages, mais dans le *Liber de causis II*, ce sont :

– les existants temporels complètement soumis au temps ;
– les corps célestes soumis au temps en ce qui concerne leurs actes, mais au-dessus du temps en ce qui concerne leur substance ;
– les formes séparées complètement au-dessus du temps [âme et intellect] ;

8 Les éléments communs sont indiqués en caractères gras dans les citations.

9 Pour le texte arabe, voir Al-ʿĀmirī, *Kitāb al-Fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim al-ilāhīya*, p. 116 dans l'ordre inverse.

– la durée ;
– la cause première.

Chez le savant du Khorasan nous trouvons :
– les existants temporels complètement soumis au temps ;
– les corps célestes avec le temps ;
– les formes avec le temps en ce qui concerne leurs actes, mais en-dessus du temps en ce qui concerne leur essence [les âmes ?] ;
– l'intellect [complètement en-dessus du temps] ;
– le Créateur.

Alors que le *Liber de causis II* intègre la durée comme entité ontologique, notre philosophe ne l'adopte pas, mais divise les formes séparées en deux, à savoir âme et intellect. De cette façon, il parvient exactement au schème ontologique que nous avons déjà vu plus haut. Ainsi, ce dernier passage des *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* ne s'explique que grâce à l'hypothèse selon laquelle al-ʿĀmirī a eu accès à une version du *Liber de causis* qui contiendrait aussi du matériel qui aurait, aujourd'hui, seulement survécu dans la version du *Liber de causis II*. Cela signifie que le modèle pour la paraphrase du savant du Khorasan serait probablement une version plus vaste que celle qui a été traduite en latin. Donc, cette version hypothétique aurait été la source du *Liber de causis*, du *Liber de causis II* et d'al-ʿAmirī, et ce serait plutôt à elle qu'au *Liber de causis* que l'attribution au philosophe al-Kindī proposée par Cristina d'Ancona s'appliquerait[10]. Cette version pourrait être appellée Proto-*Liber de causis*. Pourtant la question de la source des *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques* devient encore plus compliquée quand nous considérons un autre texte avec lequel la paraphrase d'al-ʿĀmirī possède quelques similarités, à savoir le *Livre sur le mouvement* (*Kitāb al-ḥaraka*).

Le *Livre sur le mouvement* est attribué à Aristote et a été conservé dans deux manuscrits assez récents de Turquie (Ankara et Istanbul[11]), dont le second est une copie du premier. Il s'agit d'une compilation d'extraits des *Éléments de théologie* et des *Éléments de physique* de Proclus et de divers matériaux aristotéliciens, provenant probablement des commentateurs. Ce qui nous intéresse pour le moment est bien évidemment l'ensemble des passages paraphrasant les *Éléments de théologie* et leur rapport au *Liber de causis* ou, plus précisément, aux *Libri de causis*. Le problème qui se pose est que la plupart des propositions procliennes du *Livre sur le mouvement* sont uniquement conser-

10 Voir plus haut et note 3.

11 Mon édition diplomatique de ce manuscrit se trouve à http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/mss/viewer.html?viewColumns=sawsTexts%3AHME5683.KHar.saws01.

vées dans cette œuvre. Ce manque de propositions communes se retrouve dans presque tous les textes de la tradition arabe des *Éléments de théologie*, à savoir :

– un groupe des textes assez homogène qui contient les deux versions du *Liber de causis* et la paraphrase d'al-ʿĀmirī – nous pouvons aussi ajouter le petit traité attribué soit à Platon soit à al-Fārābī, *l'Épître sur la réfutation de celui qui soutient que l'homme disparaît après sa mort* (*Risāla fī l-radd ʿalā man qāla inna l-insāna talāšā wa-fanā baʿda mawtihi*) et l'épitomé du *Liber de causis* de ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Baġdādī,
– puis les versions arabes des propositions procliennes dites *Proclus Arabus*, éditées pour la plupart par Gerhard Endress, qui partagent une seule proposition avec les *Liber de causis I* et *II* (167), et deux autres seulement avec le *Liber de causis II* (16, 21),
– et enfin les passages inspirés des *Éléments de théologie* de Proclus dans le *Livre sur le mouvement*, qui partagent trois propositions avec celles du *Proclus Arabus* (15, 17, 76) et une avec le *Liber de causis II* (59).

En conséquence, à cause du manque de parallèles entre ces trois groupes de textes distincts, il est difficile d'avancer une conclusion quant aux rapports entre ces groupes de textes en général ; il en va de même pour ce qui nous concerne maintenant plus précisément, à savoir les relations du *Livre sur le mouvement* avec les autres textes de la tradition arabe des *Éléments*. Ce qui ressort, néanmoins, est que notre anonyme, ou plutôt notre Pseudo-Aristote, retravaille sa ou ses sources procliennes sous l'angle de son thème principal, c'est-à-dire sous l'angle du mouvement. Cela se voit en comparant les deux versions de la proposition 59 du Proclus, à savoir la version dans le deuxième chapitre du *Liber de causis II*, qui est une reproduction fort interprétative du texte grec[12], et la version dans le *Livre sur le mouvement*[13] :

12 Cf. la version des *Éléments* : « Tout ce qui est substantiellement simple est meilleur ou pire que ce qui est complexe. Puisque les extrémités du réel sont produites par des causes moins nombreuses et plus simples, alors que les moyens termes le sont par des causes plus nombreuses, ceux-ci seront complexes, tandis que, parmi les extrêmes, les uns seront plus simples par excès, les autres par défaut. Par ailleurs, que les extrêmes soient produits par des causes moins nombreuses, c'est évident. La raison en est que les principes plus élevés à la fois commencent à agir avant les moins élevés et étendent leur action plus loin qu'eux, jusqu'à des termes que l'infériorité dynamique de ces dérivés soustrait à leur progression. C'est bien pourquoi le dernier des êtres, comme le premier, est extrêmement simple : il procède du premier tout seul (ἀπὸ μόνου πρόεισι τοῦ πρώτου). Mais cette simplicité est d'un côté supérieure à toute synthèse, et de l'autre inférieure. La loi est la même pour tous les cas ». (trad. Trouillard 1965, p. 98).

13 Les éléments communs à la lettre sont indiqués en caractères gras.

Liber de causis II, ch. 2 :

> [Il dit] Toute **chose simple est meilleure que la chose composée** ou bien **inférieure à elle**, car les extrémités des choses sont plus simples que les choses simples[14], et je dis que les choses simples[15] sont plus composées que les extrémités, mais entre les extrémités, l'une est meilleure et l'autre est plus vile. Quant à l'extrémité qui est la meilleure, elle **est semblable à l'intelligence**. Quant à l'extrémité qui est la plus vile, elle est semblable à la matière. Certes l'intelligence est meilleure que les choses parce que sa puissance qui coule sur ce qui est au-dessous d'elle coule davantage que celle qui coule de l'âme. Et s'il en est ainsi, nous revenons ⟨à notre propos⟩ et nous disons que le Bien pur, je veux dire la cause première, fait couler sa puissance sur les choses bien davantage que ce qui coule de la puissance de l'âme, et il n'en est ainsi que parce que **tout ce qui avoisine** la cause **premièr**e est une puissance qui fait être davantage les choses. Or, l'intelligence est plus près de la cause première que l'âme, puis la matière qui ne fait que recevoir de l'intelligence et de l'âme, sans que sa puissance coule sur autre chose, en raison de l'**éloignement** de la cause première. Et la matière n'est que simple parce qu'elle est une trace d'entre les traces d'une chose simple, je veux dire l'âme. Toutefois même si elle est simple, elle est plus vile, plus basse que la nature et que les choses composées, parce qu'elle n'a aucune puissance active qui coule sur autre chose. Mais elle n'est qu'une puissance réceptive sur laquelle coulent les formes. **La matière est inférieure** à la nature et **à toutes** choses créées, car ⟨la nature⟩ fait couler sur elle sa puissance et accomplit sur elle des actes merveilleux. **Ainsi a été rendu clair** et expliqué : la chose **simple** est ce qui est meilleur **que** les choses **composé**es et c'est l'intelligence, et d'elle vient ce qui est inférieur à l'intelligence, c'est-à-dire la matière, comme nous l'avons dit et montré.
>
> tr. THILLET, OUDAIMAH 2001-2002, p. 318-320

Le Livre sur le mouvement :

> La preuve du fait que la **chose simple est** soit **meilleure que les choses composées** soit **inférieure à elles**, vient du fait que les choses compo-

14 Une émendation à laquelle on pourrait penser pour le terme « simples » (المبسوطات) serait « intermédiaires » (المتوسطات).

15 Cf. n. 14.

> sées sont, certes, composées de l'agent et de l'agi, mais que l'agent est simple et l'agi est aussi simple. Quant à l'agent, il est le premier moteur, et quant à l'agi, il est le premier recevant, c'est-à-dire le premier agi et mû. Donc le simple est meilleur que tout le composé et quant à **la matière**, elle est ainsi **inférieure à tout** le composé, parce qu'elle n'a ni *ḥilya* ni forme (*ṣūra*). Ainsi **tout ce qui avoisine** le **premier** moteur est meilleur et plus noble que la chose qui est **éloignée** de lui, et **est semblable à l'intelligence**. Car l'intelligence est du bien pour toutes les choses. Ainsi tout ce qui avoisine la matière est inférieur et plus vil que la chose qui est éloignée d'elle, et est semblable au corps. Car il est inférieur et plus vil que le vivant. **Ainsi a été rendu clair**: le **simple** est plus digne **que le composé**[16].

Le deuxième chapitre du *Liber de causis II* constitue une version du texte grec de Proclus qui s'inscrit bien au cadre interprétatif du Proto-*Liber de causis*, qui est attesté par les *Libri de causis* et la paraphrase d'al-ʿĀmiri. Les classes des existants mentionnés par Proclus sont identifiées avec celles d'une hiérarchie ontologique plutôt inspirée de Plotin. Donc l'hypothèse se confirme que le *Liber de causis II* reflèterait bien la version de la proposition 59 des *Éléments* du Proto-*Liber de causis* et, en conséquence, le modèle de notre Pseudo-Aristote. Car, basé sur le contenu et le style du *Livre sur le mouvement*, il paraît évident que ce traité a été composé probablement durant le neuvième ou le début du dixième siècle. À ce moment-là, le compilateur pseudo-aristotélicien aurait encore dû avoir accès à la version du Proto-*Liber de causis* initiale ou, pour le moins, à une révision qui n'aurait pas déjà passé par plusieurs étapes. Son modèle est encore bien visible dans le passage du *Livre sur le mouvement*, mais la mention des extrémités, qui est, certes, difficile à comprendre dans la présentation du *Liber de causis II*, est supprimée. Le compilateur pseudo-aristotélicien a aussi omis la conception néoplatonicienne de l'émanation du Bien, qui n'avait, visiblement, pas d'intérêt pour sa théorie. Par contre, il a ajouté deux concepts fortement aristotéliciens, ce qui donne beaucoup de sens si nous nous souvenons que notre auteur prétend être Aristote; ces éléments sont l'agent et l'agi, et le premier moteur. Un indice important que la source de ce dernier passage ne peut pas être le chapitre du *Liber de causis II* cité précédemment est la présence du terme *ḥilya* dans le sens de « forme » seulement dans le *Livre sur le mouvement*. Nous disons « indice », parce qu'il est, bien sûr, possible que, d'une part, notre

16 Pour le texte arabe, voir le manuscrit Hacı Mahmud 5683, 126b17-127a11 dans ma transcription indiquée en note 11.

anonyme a décidé d'ajouter ici ce terme trouvé ailleurs dans le *Liber de causis II*, à savoir au chapitre 22[17]. D'autre part, le hendiadys *ḥilya* et *ṣura*, que le compilateur a utilisé, se trouve seulement dans le *Sage Grec* (*al-šayḫ al-yūnānī*), une reproduction partielle des *Ennéades* de Plotin aussi attribuée au cercle du philosophe al-Kindī[18]. Ce fait porte à croire que le Proto-*Liber de causis*, qui aurait très bien pu employer ce hendiadys, pourrait bien être la source de Pseudo-Aristote. En tout cas, il mérite d'être noté que le mot *ḥilya* est l'origine du mot *helyatin* dans la version latine du *Liber de causis*.

La question de savoir si c'était vraiment notre Pseudo-Aristote du *Livre sur le mouvement* qui a introduit la notion de mouvement dans les propositions procliennes en arabe se pose lorsque nous comparons son texte avec la paraphrase d'al-ʿĀmirī. Chez le philosophe du Khorasan, nous trouvons un passage qui est inspiré par la proposition 45 de Proclus et qui fait allusion au mouvement – là, où ni Proclus ni les *Libri de causis* le font, mais où, au contraire, le *Livre sur le mouvement* le fait. Est-il alors envisageable que le concept du mouvement ait été introduit dans quelques propositions des *Éléments* de la tradition proclienne arabe avant même la composition du *Livre sur le mouvement* et que le compilateur ait seulement collectionné des passages parlant déjà du mouvement ? Examinons donc les versions de la proposition 45. La version originelle de Proclus dit :

> Aucun auto-constituant n'est soumis à la génération (ἀγένητον). S'il est soumis à la génération, il sera pour cette raison même essentiellement imparfait et il aura besoin de recevoir sa perfection d'un autre. Mais du moment qu'il se produit lui-même, il est parfait et autonome. Car toute être engendré reçoit sa perfection d'un autre qui donne la génération à ce qui n'est pas. La génération, en effet, est un passage (ὁδός) de l'absence de perfection à la perfection opposée.
>
> tr. TROUILLARD 1965, p. 90

Les versions des *Libri de causis*, qui reprennent ce passage de Proclus, sont très proches, bien que celle du *Liber de causis II* soit légèrement plus longue, et que l'on peut la considérer comme complète[19] :

17 Le terme se trouve aussi dans le *Liber de causis*, ch. 8, et chez al-ʿĀmirī, ch. 16.

18 Voir [Anonymous], [*Philosophy Reader*], p. 94, passage (33) ; p. 100, passage (39) ; et p. 106, passage (41). Pour les traditions arabes de Plotin et de Proclus et leur origine du cercle d'al-Kindī, voir Endress 1973, p. 186-188.

19 Voir *Liber de causis*, ch. 24, et *Liber de causis II*, ch. 9.

> **Toute substance subsistant par** elle-même n'est pas créée d'une autre chose. Et si l'on dit : « il se peut que la chose subsistant par elle-même ait été créée, et qu'elle soit créée ». Nous disons s'il se peut que la substance subsistant par elle-même ait été créée il n'est pas douteux que cette substance est déficiente ayant besoin d'être complétée par quelque choses d'autre ; car tout créé n'est achevé que du fait de sa création. La preuve en est la génération elle-même. En effet la génération n'est que le chemin **de la déficience à la perfection.**
>
> tr. THILLET, OUDAIMAH 2001-2002, p. 328

Le début du passage suivant d'al-ʿĀmirī est clairement une paraphrase d'un texte arabe très similaire au texte du *Liber de causis II*[20], pourtant la seconde moitié semble être inspirée plutôt de la proposition 41 des *Éléments*[21], qui n'est pas intégrée dans les *Libri de causis*. Voici le passage en question des *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques*, ch. 17 :

> La réalisation de **toute substance subsistant par** l'essence de son créateur n'a pas besoin de devenir progressivement cette chose, [c'est-à-dire de passer] lentement **de la déficience à la perfection** qui lui est propre.
>
> En revanche, ce dont la réalisation dépend de cette sorte de progression, possède une matière mue et une disposition de recevoir le contraire.

Le lien avec la proposition 41 des *Éléments* est encore plus visible dans le passage du *Livre sur le mouvement*, qui s'inspire, comme al-ʿĀmirī, des propositions 45 et 41 :

> La chose fermement établie dans son essence n'est pas soumise à la génération ; car si elle n'a besoin ni d'une matière qui la porte pour qu'elle soit établie et persévère, ni d'un moteur, qui la meut de la puissance à l'acte, elle se contente de son essence pour son maintien et pour être établie. Au

20 Voir les éléments communs à la lettre indiqués en caractères gras dans les textes de *Liber de causis II* et d'al-ʿĀmirī.

21 Elle dit : « Tout être qui existe dans un autre est produit uniquement par un autre. Au contraire, tout être qui existe en soi-même est autoconstituant. Ce qui existe dans un autre et a besoin d'un sujet ne saurait en aucun cas être générateur de soi-même. Car ce qui est capable de s'engendrer soi-même n'a pas besoin d'un appui extrinsèque, puisqu'il se donne sa propre cohésion et trouve en lui-même sa sauvegarde sans recourir à un sujet. … » (tr. Trouillard 1965, p. 88).

> contraire, la chose qui n'existe que par une matière et un moteur, qui la meut de la puissance à l'acte, a besoin d'une chose qui la porte[22].

Tandis que la dernière phrase « la chose qui la porte » est très probablement la traduction de τὸ ὑποκείμενον, qui se trouve aussi dans les *Libri de causis*[23], les éléments « matière » et « moteur » sont propres au *Livre sur le mouvement* et aux *Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques*. Dans ces derniers, ils apparaissent condensés dans l'expression de « matière mue ». Ces deux concepts rappellent quand même fortement la terminologie et philosophie d'Aristote, surtout si nous considérons les deux spécifications que fournissent al-ʿĀmirī et le Pseudo-Aristote. Le premier parle aussi d'« une disposition de recevoir le contraire », c'est-à-dire qu'il adjoint une partie de la définition aristotélicienne de la substance ; le second ajoute à propos du moteur « qui la meut de la puissance à l'acte » et se met donc aussi fermement dans le cadre de la philosophie du Stagirite. La présence de ces éléments aristotéliciens dans deux textes de la tradition proclienne arabe pose de nouvelles questions, surtout la question d'une interprétation aristotélicienne qui aurait, soit peut-être déjà concerné quelques propositions intégrées dans le Proto-*Liber de causis*, soit été faite dans une version révisée du Proto-*Liber de causis* que l'on devrait ensuite supposer être la source d'al-ʿĀmirī et du Pseudo-Aristote. Pour le moment, les indices pour trancher cette question ne suffisent pas et nous pouvons seulement espérer que des nouveaux textes de la tradition proclienne arabe soient découverts dans le futur.

La conclusion momentanément possible est le constat des deux lectures différentes du matériel venant très probablement du Proto-*Liber de causis* que nous trouvons dans *Les Chapitres sur les thèmes métaphysiques*, et l'autre dans *le Livre sur le mouvement* ; d'un côté, une interprétation religieuse qui maintient le pouvoir absolu de Dieu, et de l'autre, une lecture aristotélisante, qui souligne l'importance du mouvement. Cette dernière lecture pourrait bien être inspirée de Proclus lui-même et ses *Éléments de physique* dont se trouvent quelques propositions paraphrasées aussi dans le *Livre sur le mouvement*[24].

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22 Pour le texte arabe, voir le manuscrit Hacı Mahmud 5683, 125a2-6 dans ma transcription indiquée en note 11.

23 Voir, par exemple, *Liber de causis*, ch. 28 et *Liber de causis II*, ch. 11.

24 Nous remercions les évaluateurs anonymes pour leurs remarques très aidantes et notre chère collègue Marthe Raymond pour sa relecture du français.

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CHAPTER 10

Contextualizing the *Kalām fī maḥḍ al-khair* / *Liber de causis*

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While the *Liber de causis*, Gerard of Cremona's twelfth century Latin translation of the *Kalām fī maḥḍ al-khair* (hereafter, the *Arabic De causis*[1]) was commonly albeit incorrectly ascribed to Aristotle[2] and in some sense accepted as authored by Aristotle by many medieval thinkers, modern accounts have sometimes focused on its Greek source in the *Elements of Theology* of Proclus as if it is little more than Proclus in Arabic.[3] No doubt some have been influenced by the remarks of Thomas Aquinas who first wrote that the source was not Aristotle but Proclus in his 1272 *Commentary on the Liber de causis*. While Aquinas

1 With this name I refer to the Arabic work which was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona. Presently there are two extant complete Arabic manuscripts and various other Arabic works which are witnesses to portions of the *Arabic De causis*. Whether an extant Hebrew translation may be from another Arabic manuscript is yet to be fully determined. The Latin translation itself is a witness to another Arabic manuscript. The Arabic text was critically edited in my 1981 doctoral dissertation at the University of Toronto. See Taylor 1981. Earlier printed editions were published in *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift* and *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*. Another work that in some ways intersects with the *Arabic De causis* was discovered by S. Oudaimah and edited, translated and published by P. Thillet and S. Oudaimah. See Thillet, Oudaimah 2001–2002. Other Arabic texts from the *Elements of Theology* are edited by Gerhard Endress in Endress 1973. For an overview the *De causis* generally, see the collected essays in D'Ancona 1995 and D'Ancona and Taylor 2003. For more recent work, see D'Ancona 2010 and 2014. See Wakelnig 2006 and 2011. Wakelnig's developing research on the Arabic *Elements of Theology* seems to support the notion that all or very much of the Greek was translated into Arabic. See Wakelnig 2012. C. D'Ancona and I are now preparing a new edition of the *Arabic De causis*.

2 The work is "Aristotelian" insofar as it is a product of the *Circle of al-Kindi*, as is the famous *Theology of Aristotle* (see *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*) of the *Plotiniana Arabica* which was prepared by al-Kindī from the *Plotiniana Arabica* texts available to him. On the meaning of "Aristotelian" here, see Endress 1997 and also D'Ancona 2017. Regarding D'Ancona's project to edit the *Theology of Aristotle*, see http://www.greekintoarabic.eu.

3 Even now Oxfordreference.com simply describes it as "A treatise, consisting largely of extracts from Proclus' 'Elements of Theology', put together in Arabic by an unknown Muslim philosopher c. 850." See http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100103903.

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may have accepted early in his career that this work had some connection with the teachings of Aristotle or was even composed in some sense by Aristotle as did many predecessors and contemporaries, he declared in his *Commentary* that the *De causis* seemed to be a work which "one of the Arab philosophers excerpted … from this book by Proclus, especially since everything in it is contained much more fully and more diffusely in that of Proclus".[4] Yet, as will be made clear in what follows, that generalization is not correct. Still, whether accepting it as Aristotelian—as was commonly done—or later less commonly as Proclean, theologians and philosophers in the context of Medieval Europe found the *Liber de causis* to be a rich and inspiring source of metaphysical and cosmological principles and reasoning on God and creatures as witnessed by well over 250 extant manuscripts and the extensive number of commentaries of various forms that have survived to today.[5]

In its own context, however, the *Arabic De causis* is by no means merely a collection of excerpts from Proclus out of what was available of the *Elements of Theology* among the *Procleana Arabica*. Rather, although one of the Arabic manuscripts prefaces the work with the explanation that it is a summary of the account of Plato excerpted by Proclus and is said to be by Plato,[6] it is nevertheless unquestionably a work of the "Aristotelian" *Circle of al-Kindī*[7] in which appeared the famous *Theology of Aristotle* edited by al-Kindī himself

4 Thomas Aquinas, *Super Librum de causis*, p. 3; transl. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the* Book of Causes, p. 4. L. Minio Paluello 1972, p. 530–531, remarks that it is likely William of Moerbeke who first discovered that this work draws on the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus. Aquinas is the first to note that in writing in his 1272 *Commentary*. Aquinas early in his career seems to have followed the custom of many to attribute this work to "the philosopher," scil. Aristotle. This is the case for his citations of the work in his *Commentary on the Sentences*. For example, see *Super Sent*. I, d.8, q.1, a.2 sed contra.

5 Taylor 1983; and Calma 2016, p. 20 f.

6 See *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 136 and 282. The Leiden manuscript Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Oriental 209 (formerly Golius 209) ascribes the work to Aristotle: *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ li-Arisṭūṭālis fī al-khair al-maḥḍ*: "The book of Aristotle's Exposition on the Pure Good." The Latin tradition generally ascribes it to Aristotle, as does one of the earliest and most important Latin manuscripts, Aosta, Seminario maggiore 71 (olim Ai° D 20) which has *Liber Aristotelis de expositione bonitatis purae*: "The Book of Aristotle on the Exposition of the Pure Good." Ankara, Ankara Universitesi, Dil ve Tarih-Čografya Fakültesi Kütüphanesi, MS Ismail Saib 1 1696, has "Discourse on the Pure Good. It is said that Proclus excerpted it from the Discourse of Plato and it is also said that it is by Plato." The issue of the differing ascriptions found in the Arabic manuscripts will be addressed in the new edition of the *Arabic De causis* now in preparation.

7 This valuable term is first set out in Endress 1997. On the meaning of "Aristotelian" here, see Endress 1997 and also D'Ancona 2017.

and other texts from the available *Plotiniana Arabica*.[8] This may be why two manuscripts attribute the *Arabic De causis* to Aristotle. In the preface to the *Theology of Aristotle* the author—presumably al-Kindī himself—indicates the *Theology of Aristotle* is based on a translation by the Christian Ibn Nāʿima al-Ḥimṣī, something that likely applies to all the texts of the *Plotiniana Arabica* because of the similarity of vocabulary and doctrine.[9] The *Plotiniana Arabica* itself in its three collections, the *Theology of Aristotle*, the ps.-Farabian *Letter on Divine Science*, and the *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman*, considered as a whole is a work of translations, paraphrases and distinctively innovative doctrines regularly transforming Plotinian teachings to its own ends.[10] The novel teachings of the *Plotiniana Arabica* also are foundational for the unknown author of the *Arabic De causis*. This is simply because, though the *Arabic De causis* employs translations of texts of the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus, those are often sculpted to fit the vocabulary and doctrine found in the *Plotiniana Arabica* as well as to fit the reasoning the author of the *Arabic De causis* is constructing in his particular argumentative contexts.[11] Further, in the case of one of the most important metaphysical chapters of the *Arabic De causis*, there is no direct use of any text of the *Elements of Theology* at all; rather, nearly the entire chapter is formed by teachings found in the three works making up the *Plotiniana Arabica*.[12]

In this short contribution I contextualize the *Arabic De causis* as a work conceived and written in the doctrinal framework of the teachings found in the *Plotiniana Arabica*, texts and teachings which set out a version of the thought of Plotinus much revised in ways to fit the religious and philosophical contexts of its time.[13] I do so by examining the single chapter of the *Arabic De causis* which does not draw explicitly on a text from the *Elements of Theology* but

8 Adamson 2017; Adamson 2002; D'Ancona 1991; 2004; 2012; 2017.

9 D'Ancona 2017, p. 10; Adamson 2002, p. 7–9; Adamson 2017, section 2, Historical questions. Some fascinating conjectures about Ibn Na'ima and the Christian contexts of his time are discussed in Treiger 2015. My thanks to M. Chase for calling my attention to this and for other valuable corrections and suggestions.

10 Lewis 1959 contains translations of nearly all the *Plotiniana Arabica* available at that time. Though D'Ancona's ERC Project is focused on the *Theology of Aristotle*, her research includes all of the *Plotiniana Arabica*. See http://www.greekintoarabic.eu/index.php?id=2 and http://www.greekintoarabic.eu/index.php?id=26&reset=1.

11 This has been well established by C. D'Ancona in a long series of articles on the *Arabic De causis*. See her collection in D'Ancona 1995a, particularly D'Ancona 1995b. Also see D'Ancona 1993.

12 See D'Ancona 1995a, p. 191 and more generally D'Ancona 2011.

13 D'Ancona argues for an influence of the *Procleana Arabica* on teachings found in the *Plotiniana Arabica* in D'Ancona 1999, 63 f.

rather derives from the *Plotiniana Arabica*[14] and just two additional sample passages of the *Arabic De causis* which evidence clearly the author's adherence to the teachings of the *Plotiniana Arabica*. The latter two selections display the author's efforts to modify the texts and ideas of the *Elements of Theology* of Proclus to form his work into the distinctive treatise that we have today. I then consider the *Arabic De causis* both as a Neoplatonic contribution to the development of metaphysical thought in the early period of philosophy in the lands of Islam and also as a work furthering the agenda of al-Kindī to show the compatibility and complementarity of philosophy to the ends of Islamic—if not more broadly Abrahamic—religion in the context of ninth century Baghdad. I conclude with a brief summary of what has been reasoned in the two major parts of this article.

1 The *Arabic De causis* and the *Plotiniana Arabica*

While the author of the *Arabic De causis* accesses texts from an Arabic version of the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus, he pulls those texts into his own philosophical context already dominated by a metaphysics based on the *Plotiniana Arabica* and the *Circle of al-Kindi*. Regarding the First Cause, the *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman* sets forth a conception of It as the True One (*al-wāḥid al-ḥaqq*) and as the Pure True Being (*al-huwiyya al-ḥaqqa al-maḥḍa*) which is without adornment[15] or form. As such It is only being (*lā ḥilya la-hā wa-lā ṣūra la-hā … anniyya faqaṭ*).[16] As Creator It is unlike any of the created things and unique (*al-mubdiʿ al-ʿawwal lā yushbih shaiʾ min al-ʿashyāʾ … al-mubdiʿ al-ʿawwal wāḥid waḥda-hu*). As First Agent It is the unmoving emanative cause of the first effect, intellect, through which things intelligible and sensible emanate from It (*al-fāʿil al-awwal … sākin ghaira mutaḥarrik … al-maʿlūl al-awwal … inbajasat min-hu*

14 See the list of source propositions of Proclus's *Elements of Theology* for the *Arabic De causis* in D'Ancona 1995b, p. 191.

15 *Ḥilya* can mean jewelry or something adorning a person. D'Ancona translates it as "détermination formelle" and indicates the sense of predicate. Hence, the First Cause transcends predication and names except in the limited sense that It may be denominated through Its effects, a sense that does not capture the very nature of the First Cause in Itself. See D'Ancona 1995a, p. 18, 20, 106, 108, 110, 171, 182.

16 Wakelnig 2014, p. 93; 88; 94–96 respectively. For this article I draw key Arabic texts largely although not solely from Wakelnig's edition with translation of Oxford, Bold. Or. Marsh 539 which contains many of the extant *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman*, though I freely modify the translation at times to show the similarity of the Arabic in that work and the *Arabic De causis*.

sā'ir al-ʿashyā' al-ʿaqlïyya wa-al-ḥissiya bi-tawassuṭ al-ʿaql).[17] And the *Theology of Aristotle* has a consideration of *Enneads* IV 7.8.3 with a summarizing account as follows:

> We say that God … is cause of intellect, and intellect is cause of soul, and soul is cause of nature, and nature is cause of all generated individual beings. However, while some things are cause of others, God … is cause of all of them altogether, though He is cause of some of them mediately and cause of some of them without mediation.[18]

Further, the True One, while It remains beyond the reach of created knowledge, is Itself the pure transcendent knowledge which encompasses every sort of knowledge and is the cause of all the kinds of knowledge (*huwa al-ʿïlm al-maḥḍ al-ʿaqṣà al-muḥīṭ bi-kull ʿïlm wa ʿïlla al-ʿulūm*). Since It is without form, the First Creator is unlimited or infinite in every way (*fa-huwa min kull al-jihāt ghaira mutanāh*) and not in any way a plurality (*kathīran min jiha*).[19] It is what conserves (*ḥāfïẓu-hā*) all created things, for Its essence is the Pure True Good (*dhāta-hu hiya al-khair al-maḥḍ al-ḥaqq*).[20]

The *Plotiniana Arabica*'s characterizations of the True One and Creator in Itself and in Its causation of creatures set out in the previous paragraph are also found in the sole chapter of the *Arabic De causis* which does not draw directly on any proposition of the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus. In chapter 8 the author writes:

> The stability and the subsistence of every intellect are only through the Pure Good which is the First Cause. The power of intellect is more strongly unitary than [that of] second things which are after it because they do not attain to its knowledge. This came to be so only because it is a cause for what is below it.
>
> The proof of that is what we state: intellect governs (*mudabbirun*) all the things which are below it through the divine power in it, and by that [divine power] it sustains things because by [divine power] it is the cause

17 Wakelnig 2014, p. 94–96; and 94.

18 *Aflūṭīn*, p. 50. My translation. I follow Lewis 1959, p. 205, in retaining the reading of manuscript Istanbul, Ayasofya 2457. Though I use the text of Badawi, I generally follow the readings of Lewis. Note that the author follows the Plotinian scheme of the One, followed by intellect, soul and nature. This is also found in the *Arabic De causis*, chapter 8.

19 Wakelnig 2014, p. 98 and 100 respectively.

20 Wakelnig 2014, p. 102 and 98 respectively.

of things. It sustains and encompasses all the things below it. For what is primary for things and a cause of them sustains those things and governs (*mudabbirun*) them, and none of them eludes it due to its exalted power. Intellect, then, is ruler (*ra'is*) of all the things below it, sustaining and governing them. Just as nature governs over the things below it through the power of soul, likewise soul governs the things below it by the power of intellect as intellect similarly governs nature through divine power. Intellect came to sustain things which are after it, to govern them and to exalt its power over them only because it is an intellectual power which is a power neither characteristic of soul nor characteristic of nature because they are not a substantial power belonging to it. Rather, it is the power of substantial powers because it is the cause of them.

Intellect encompasses generation, nature and what is at the horizon of nature, namely soul, for it is above nature. For nature encompasses generation, and soul encompasses nature, and intellect encompasses soul. Intellect, then, encompasses all things. Intellect has come to be so only due to the First Cause which is exalted over all things because it is the cause of intellect, soul, nature and all other things.

The First Cause is neither intellect nor soul nor nature, but rather It is above intellect, soul and nature because It is creator of all things. However, It is creator of intellect without mediation and creator of soul, nature and all other things through the mediation of intellect. And divine knowledge is not like the knowledge of intellect nor like the knowledge of soul, but rather [divine knowledge] is above the knowledge of the intellect and the knowledge of soul because [divine knowledge] is creative of [the kinds of] knowledge. Divine power is above every power of intellect, soul and nature because it is cause of every power. Intellect possesses formal adornment (*ḥilyah*) because it is being (*anniyya*) and form (*ṣurah*), and likewise soul possesses formal adornment and nature possesses formal adornment, but the First Cause has no formal adornment because It is only being (*anniyya faqaṭ*). So if someone says: It must have formal adornment, we say: Its formal adornment is infinite and Its [distinctive] individual nature (*shakhṣ*) is the Pure Good pouring forth on intellect all goodnesses and on all other things through the mediation of intellect.[21]

21 Square brackets indicate my addition, mostly of the referents of pronouns. This translation is based on a draft of a newly revised edition of the *Arabic De causis* in preparation by Cristina D'Ancona and myself. The text and translation in my unpublished dissertation are close to this. See *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 298–300. Cf. *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift*, p. 76–79; *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*, p. 3–4.

For the metaphysical teachings in chapter 8 of the *Arabic de causis* the author clearly draws on the *Plotiniana Arabica* from all three of the collections extant today: the *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman*, the *Theology of Aristotle* and the pseudo-Farabian *Epistle on the Divine Science*. The doctrines of the One (i) as pure being and only being without adornment (*ḥilya*) or form (*ṣura*), (ii) as the Creator and cause of intellect and through the mediation of intellect cause of soul and of nature, (iii) as the Pure Good, (iv) as Itself infinite, and more are the same in both the *Plotiniana Arabica* and the *Arabic de causis* with the same vocabulary used in both works.[22]

We can note in addition that (v) the doctrine of the Creator and Pure Good as Itself transcendent knowledge creative of the kinds of knowledge found in intellect and soul introduces in chapter 8 of the *Arabic De Causis* a distinctive conception commonly disavowed of the One by Plotinus when it employs the notion of Divine Knowledge.[23] For Plotinus the notion that the First Principle has or is knowledge is clearly rejected for the sake of Its simplicity. A teaching such as that of Aristotle wherein the highest principles and separate movers are considered as self-thinking thought is explicitly rejected by Plotinus who relegates that to the second principle, *Nous* or Intellect.[24] Yet this notion can be found in the *Plotiniana Arabica* in its third extant portion, the pseudo-Farabian *Epistle on the Divine Science*, *Risāla fī'l-ʿilm al-ilāhī*. This has recently been analyzed and expounded in detail by Cristina D'Ancona who shows that the description of the Creator or First Cause as having knowledge may well be grounded in a misreading (unintentional or otherwise) of the text of Plotinus on the part of the translator of the Greek into Arabic.[25] In brief, for Plotinus, while the One is Itself unknowable and not Itself characterized as knowing, from the viewpoint of *Nous* or Intellect which proceeds from the One, the One is what *Nous* is in some sense able to know with the result that *Nous* is filled with unlimited forms in its attempt to apprehend the One. To this extent *from the perspective of Nous*, the One is a *noeton*, a thing known. What we find in the *Epistle on the Divine Science* of the *Plotiniana Arabica* is that the translator and

22 For a much more detailed account of the doctrines and sources of this Chapter, see D'Ancona 1995b.

23 Of this D'Ancona writes, "the Arabic sentence gives a distinct non-Plotinian ring." D'Ancona 2018, p. 148. Also see p. 149. Still, for a discussion of passages in which Plotinus attributes to the One knowledge or intellection of some sort, see Bussanich 1987.

24 See, e.g., Plotinus, *Enneads* V 1, 9. For more references and discussion, see Rist 1973.

25 For the translator, however, this may not have been a mistake but rather a confirmation of the truth of God as all knowing, a teaching common to the Abrahamic religious traditions. This issue will have to be taken up elsewhere. Note, however, that M. Chase argues in his article in the present volume that this notion may come from Porphyry.

adaptor has taken that description of the One as *noeton from the perspective of Nous* and applied it as a predicate characterizing the One or Creator Itself. Hence, in the *Epistle on the Divine Science* it can be said that the Creator and First Cause is in Its own right *noeton*, knows Itself, and, thus, has Divine Knowledge. This is the doctrine we find set out in chapter 8 of the *Arabic De causis*, a doctrine that can be seen in context to draw upon Aristotle as well as Plotinus.[26] Still, to say that the First Cause has knowledge or is not without knowledge does not imply that Its knowledge is derived from the world, that is, from anything outside Itself.

It is in accord with these teachings of the *Plotiniana Arabica* that the author transforms texts of Proclus considered in the two samples to follow.

The first sample is a partial extract from the beginning of Chapter 5 of the *Arabic De causis*[27] where we find the following:

> The First Cause transcends attribute (*al-ṣifa*). Languages are incapable of [expressing] Its attribute by describing (*waṣf*) Its being (*anniyati-hā*) because It is above every cause. It is described only through the second causes which are illuminated by the light of the First Cause. For the First Cause illuminates first Its effect and is not illuminated by another light because It is the Pure Light above which there is no ⟨other⟩ light. For this reason, therefore, the First alone came to surpass ⟨any⟩ attribute (…).[28]

The *Procleana Arabica* sources for this chapter are Propositions 11 and 123 of the *Elements of Theology*, yet neither makes mention of light or illumination. At the start of proposition 123 we find the following:

> Prop. 123. All that is divine is itself ineffable and unknowable by any secondary being because of its supra-existential unity, but it may be apprehended and known from the existents which participate it wherefore only the First Principle is completely unknowable, as being unparticipated.[29]

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26 D'Ancona 2018, p. 145 f.

27 Cf. D'Ancona 2000.

28 This translation is based on a draft of a new edition of the *Arabic De causis* in preparation. The text and translation in my unpublished 1981 dissertation are close to this. See *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 160–161. Cf. *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift*, p. 69–70; *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*, p. 11–12.

29 Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, p. 108–109.

While this is a source of *Arabic De causis* Chapter 5, the source of the use of the metaphors of light and illumination is rather the *Sayings of the Greek Wiseman* in the *Plotiniana Arabica*:

> It is said that the Pure One resembles light, the second one which is related to something else resembles the sun, and the third thing resembles the moon which attains its light from the sun. Thus, in the soul, there is an acquired intellect which illuminates it with its light and makes it intellectual. In the intellect, there is essential light, and it is not only light, but also a substance receiving light. As to what illuminates the intellect and pours light over it, It is only light and nothing other than light, but simple, absolute, pure light which pours Its power over the intellect and makes it an illuminating, enlightening intellect. Yet, the light in the intellect is something in something else, whereas the light which illuminates the intellect is not in anything else, but is light alone, subsisting and lasting in Its essence. It illuminates all things, but there are things which receive Its light more abundantly and others which receive it less.[30]

Here the author of the *Plotiniana Arabica* provides a close rendering of *Enneads* V 6,4.14–22, with some elaboration. Plotinus himself writes,

> The First, then, should be compared to light, the next, to the sun, and the third, to the celestial body of the moon, which gets its light from the sun. For Soul has intellect as an external addition which colours it when it is intellectual, but Intellect has it in itself as its own, and is not only light but that which is enlightened in its own being; and that which gives it light is nothing else but is simple light giving Intellect the power to be what it is. Why then would it have need of anything? For it is not the same as that which is in something else: for, that which is in something else is different from that which is in and by itself.[31]

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30 For the Arabic text with English translation, see Wakelnig 2014, p. 96–99. Here I modify her translation slightly. Cf. the translation by Lewis 1959, p. 367.

31 Plotinus, *Enneads* V 6,4.14–22, (transl. Armstrong, p. 210–211): Καὶ οὖν ἀπεικαστέον τὸ μὲν φωτί, τὸ δὲ ἐφεξῆς ἡλίῳ, τὸ δὲ τρίτον τῷ σελήνης ἄστρῳ κομιζομένῳ τὸ φῶς παρ' ἡλίου. Ψυχὴ μὲν γὰρ ἐπακτὸν νοῦν ἔχει ἐπιχρωννύντα αὐτὴν νοεραὰν οὖσαν, νοῦς δ' ἐν αὑτῷ οἰκεῖον ἔχει οὐ φῶς ὢν μόνον, ἀλλ' ὅ ἐστι πεφωτισμένον ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ οὐσίᾳ, τὸ δὲ παρέχον τούτῳ τὸ φῶς οὐκ ἄλλο ὂν φῶς ἐστιν ἁπλοῦν παρέχον τὴν δύναμιν ἐκείνῳ τοῦ εἶναι ὅ ἐστι. τί ἂν οὖν αὐτὸ δέοιτό τινος; οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτὸ τῷ ἐν ἄλλῳ· ἄλλο γὰρ τὸ ἐν ἄλλῳ ἐστὶ τοῦ αὐτὸ καθ' αὑτὸ ὄντος.

This account in the *Plotiniana Arabica* clearly is the inspiration for the use of the metaphors of light and illumination imported by the author into the *Arabic De causis*.

The second sample comes from *Arabic De causis* Chapter 21. Aquinas had some difficulty locating the precise source in Proclus for this chapter and suggested that it is generally based on Propositions 115 and 18 of the *Elements of Theology*.[32] D'Ancona, however, has suggested that this chapter is in some way related to Proposition 131.[33]

> The First Cause is above every name by which It is named. For neither deficiency nor mere perfection is appropriate to It because the deficient is imperfect and unable to effect a perfect act since it is deficient. The perfect, in our view, although sufficient in itself, is unable to create another thing and to pour forth anything from itself at all. If this is so, we resume and say that the First Cause is neither deficient nor merely perfect, but rather It is above perfection because It is creator of things and that which pours forth goods on them in a perfect emanation because It is a good which has neither limit nor dimensions. The First Good, therefore, fills all worlds with goods, except that each world receives of that good only in accordance with Its capacity.
>
> Thus, it has become clear and evident that the First Cause is above every name by which It is named and transcends it and is more exalted than it.[34]

This chapter of the *Arabic De causis* may well have Proposition 131 in Proclus as a source, but it seems to have been expressed here in accord with the doctrines of the *Plotiniana Arabica*. In book 10 of the *Theology of Aristotle* we find the following which draws on Plotinus, *Enneads* V 2,1. The italicized text approximates the Greek of Plotinus.

> I say that the Pure One is above the perfect and the complete. The sensible world is deficient because it is created from the perfect thing which is the intellect. Intellect comes to be perfect and complete because it is

32 Thomas Aquinas, *Super Librum de causis*, p. 115; transl. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the* Book of Causes, p. 129.

33 D'Ancona 1995, p. 191. Plotinus, *Enneads* V 2,1. may well be a source for Proposition 131.

34 This translation is based on a draft of a new edition of the *Arabic De causis* in preparation. It differs only slightly from the Arabic text in *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 232–234. Cf. *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift*, p. 99–100; *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*, p. 22–23.

> created by the True Pure One which is above perfection. It is not possible for the thing which is above perfection to create the deficient thing in an unmediated way and it is not possible for the perfect thing to create a thing perfect like itself because it is deficient in the creation, I mean by this that what is created is not in the rank of the Creator but rather is below It.
>
> The proof that *the Pure One is perfect* and above perfection is *that It has no need of anything nor does It seek to attain something. Owing to* the power of *Its perfection and Its superabundance another thing is produced from It*. For the thing which is above perfection cannot produce unless the thing be perfect: otherwise it is not above perfection. For if the perfect thing produces anything, then a fortiori the thing which is above perfection produces perfection, because It produces the perfect thing than which none of the things produced can be more powerful, more splendid or more sublime. For when the True One which is above perfection creates the perfect thing, *that perfect thing turns to its Creator and casts its gaze on It and is filled* with light and splendor from It *and becomes intellect* (…).[35]

The comparison of *Arabic De causis* chapter 8 with the metaphysical teachings and philosophical vocabulary found in the *Plotiniana Arabica* gives solid grounds for locating the author in the *Circle of al-Kindi* and even for asserting that his own thought was formed in the conceptual context of the *Plotiniana Arabica*. The two samples from *Arabic De causis* chapters 5 and 21 give further support for the view that the unknown author found the Arabic texts of the *Elements of Theology* to be a valuable opportunity to expand and further the metaphysical accounts set out in the *Plotiniana Arabica*, not to excavate the metaphysics of Proclus in its own right.[36]

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35 My translation is a modified version of what is found in Lewis 1959, p. 291–293. This corresponds to the Arabic in *Aflūṭīn*, p. 134–135. The italicized text of the English translation corresponds to portions of the Greek of Plotinus in *Enneads* V 2, 1.6–8, as indicated by Lewis. Plotinus, *Enneads*, V 2, 1.8–13 (transl. Armstrong, p. 58–59): ὃν γὰρ τέλειον τῷ μηδὲν ζητεῖν μηδὲ ἔχειν μηδὲ δεῖσθαι οἷον ὑπερερρύη καὶ τὸ ὑπερπλῆρες αὐτοῦ πεποίηκεν ἄλλο· τὸ δὲ γενόμενον εἰς αὐτὸ ἐπεστράφη καὶ ἐπληρώθη καὶ ἐγένετο πρὸς αὐτὸ βλέπον καὶ νοῦς οὗτος. καὶ ἡ μὲν πρὸς ἐκεῖνο στάσις αὐτοῦ τὸ ὂν ἐποίησεν, ἡ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ θέα τὸν νοῦν. ἐπεὶ οὖν ἔστη πρὸς αὐτό, ἵνα ἴδῃ, ὁμοῦ νοῦς γίγνεται καὶ ὄν. "[T]he One, perfect because it seeks nothing, overflows, as it were, and its superabundance makes something other than itself. This, when it has come into being, turns back upon the One and is filled, and becomes Intellect by looking towards it. Its halt and turning towards the One constitutes being, its gaze upon the One, Intellect."

36 For another good sample, see *Arabic De causis* Chapter 19. This and other similar examples will be discussed in edition of the Arabic now underway. It is worth mentioning that,

2 Brief Remarks on the Doctrinal and Historical Context of the *Arabic De causis* as a Product of the *Circle of al-Kindi* in Ninth Century Baghdad

The famous opening chapter of the *Arabic De causis* employs texts from Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, Propositions 56 and 70, to elaborate a doctrine of primary causality that explains the manner in which the presence of the First Cause is found to be primary in each and every effect and cause in all reality below It.[37] There we find argued the philosophical principle that "the universal first cause" is more causally efficacious than any secondary cause since its causality with regard to any effect is presupposed by and prior to any lower secondary cause. Further, "the remote first cause is more encompassing and more a cause of the thing than its proximate cause." The remote cause adheres more to the thing and does not separate from the thing with the separation of any secondary cause. Summarising, the author concludes,

> Thus, it has become clear and evident that the remote first cause is more a cause of the thing than its proximate cause which is immediately adjacent to [the thing] and that it emanates its power on it and conserves it and does not separate itself from it with the separation of its proximate cause, but rather it remains in it and strongly adheres to it in accordance with what we have made clear and evident.[38]

The sort of causation involved here is not Aristotelian efficient motor causation or the actuality of a preexisting potency, nor is it Aristotelian intrinsic formal or material causality. Nor is it the metaphysical efficient causality set out by Avicenna for whom the Necessary Being has only one essential act, namely the creation of Intellect as first created thing containing all the forms

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while the *Plotiniana Arabica* can be viewed as a completion of Aristotle's metaphysics, the *Arabic De causis* can be seen as a complement to the metaphysics and cosmology of the *Plotiniana Arabica*. See D'Ancona 2017, p. 14 and 22.

37 See *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 137–143. Cf. *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift*, p. 58–61; *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*, p. 3–4. On this chapter, see D'Ancona 1999 and 2001. For the author of the *Arabic De causis*, this is a metaphysical form of causality and paradigmatic participation such that the being of everything is established by the First Cause alone. A form of this teaching is endorsed by Thomas Aquinas in his *Commentary on the Sentences* at Book 2, d.1, q.1 a. 4, sol. See Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, p. 25–26. This teaching is discussed in Taylor forthcoming.

38 See Taylor 2012 for a complete translation of Chapter 1.

for lower things. Avicenna speaks of two forms of *ibdāʿ* or creation. One is absolute creation ex nihilo presupposing nothing inside shared by the Necessary Being and nothing outside It. Rather, the positing of the Necessary Being immediately entails the Necessary Being's creation of Intellect. The other is a secondary sense of *ibdāʿ* on the part of what has been created presupposing a prior cause, scil., the creative emanation of intellects, souls and celestial spheres each depending for its substance and power on what is above it.[39] Rather, this causality set out in Chapter 1 and in later chapters called creation on the part of the First Cause as Pure Being and True One (Chapter 4), as well as True Agent (Chapter 19), appears to be a Neoplatonic blend of some sort of creative efficient causality and paradigmatic causality.[40] The First Cause as

39 See Janssens 1997, especially p. 470–476.

40 I say "some sort of creative efficient causality" because the author of the *Arabic De causis* contends in Chapter 4 that the First Cause creates directly only the first created being, scil. Intellect, and all other things through the mediation of Intellect. Here, then, there is efficient originative causality in the action of the First Cause in the case of Intellect. After that, however, there is mediate creation through Intellect, yet not such that the Intellect can be called creator. Rather, only the First Cause can be called creator. Further, the author says that the First Cause alone creates the being of all things while other causes act on things only "in the manner of form, not in the matter of creation" (Chapter 17). According to the author of the *Arabic De causis*, then, though there is emanative efficient causality on the part of the First Cause in the singular case of the efficient causing of Intellect, a paradigmatic causality of participation runs through Intellect, Soul and Nature such that the transcendent pure being of the First Cause is cause of the foundational being of all other things which are but diminished images or kinds. In a forthcoming article, D'Ancona remarks that "il n'est pas nécessaire que la cause opère selon la modalité de l'efficience. Non seulement dans le monde sensible il y a des réalités qui opèrent de la sorte, mais c'est la règle dans le cas des principes intelligibles qui sont les causes véritables de la structure rationnelle immanente dans les choses, et par conséquent de leur existence même. Telle étant la causalité immobile des intelligibles, un seul et même principe peut "produire" des effets multiples et divers, non pas malgré le fait qu'il demeure immuable, mais précisément grâce à cela. Si, comme c'est le cas, la causalité immobile et toujours égale à elle-même d'un principe intelligible se retrouve participée selon des degrés différents dans ses participants, cela s'explique par une différente capacité de réception de la part de ceux-ci." (D'Ancona forthcoming.) For Aquinas, however, both efficient causality of being (conceived in terms of a distinction of existence from essence under the influence of Avicenna) and paradigmatic causality (found in the *Arabic De causis* and also in Chapter 5 of *On the Divine Names* by (ps.-)Dionysius) are involved. See Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, lib. II, d. 1, q.1 a. 4, p. 25–26. The analysis of Aquinas surely draws on what the young Thomas learned in Cologne when he attended presentations of the *Commentary on the Divine Names* by his teacher Albertus Magnus. See Albert's commentary on Chapter 5 where he relates the accounts of (ps.-)Dionysius to the philosophical work of the *Liber de causis*, Avicenna and Aristotle. Albertus Magnus, *Super*

uniquely Pure Being, True One, and True Agent is the ultimate source for the being and unity found in any thing. As the first chapter asserts, the First Cause provides the formal substrate of being upon which other formalities are built.[41] The First Cause as transcendent and unparticipated Pure Being is the cause of all lower beings by providing the participated perfection of being which is the foundation for other formalities at all levels.[42] In this sense, other formalities provided by paradigmatic realities below the First Cause can be causes of rationality and life, for example, formalities that can be removed such that a human being can have rationality and life removed and yet still be a being, as rehearsed in Chapter 1. This must be read together with the second half of Chapter 31 in which the argument is made that there must be a True One which is the unique cause of every sort of unity in things[43] and Chapter 8 and others where the First Cause is Itself pure being without delimitating form. It is on the basis of the identity of the First Cause as Pure Being and True One and on the basis of Neoplatonic participation in the paradigmatic causality of the unparticipated transcendent paradigm and the participating lower image that the author of the *Arabic De causis* claims that the First Cause alone is the Creator.[44]

Dionysius De Divinis Nominibus, p. 303–326. For more on these matters and causality in the *Arabic De causis*, see Taylor forthcoming. Cf. Taylor 2019, p. 344 f.

41 Taylor 1979, p. 506–507: "*Annīya*, translated into Latin from the Arabic as *esse*, is the formal substrate on the basis of which further perfections such as life and intelligence are received. In the *De Causis* there is no notion of being as the act of existence such as we find it in the thought of St. Thomas." The term *huwīyah* as well as *annīya* has the sense of being. See Chapters 15, 17, 19, 31.

42 The account of the transcendent unparticipated, the participated property and the participant is set out by Proclus in Proposition 23, Proclus 1993, p. 26–27, and elsewhere in various forms in *The Elements of Theology*, such as Proposition 123 cited above.

43 "There must then be a true one which causes the acquisition of unities and does not acquire ⟨its unity⟩, while all the rest of the unities are acquired." Chapter 31, *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 275. This text remains the same in draft of the new edition of the *Arabic De causis*.

44 For my reflections on the nature and meaning of the teachings of the *Arabic De causis* here and in Taylor forthcoming I benefited from the account of the metaphysics of Proclus in Siorvanes 1996, p. 48–113. For more profound considerations on Neoplatonism in the *Arabic De causis* and the *Plotiniana Arabica*, several works by Cristina D'Ancona should be consulted. See, for example, D'Ancona 1992a, D'Ancona 1992b, and D'Ancona 1999. In D'Ancona 1999 (p. 67) she remarks: "J'estime enfin que l'auteur du *De Causis* s'est, quant à lui, abondanmment inspiré de la paraphrase arabe de Plotin." In this article she also argues that the influence of the writings of the (ps.-)Dionysius plays a key role in formation of the reasoning found in the *Plotiniana Arabica* and the *Arabic De causis*. Also see D'Ancona 1995 and D'Ancona, Taylor 2003.

This is the reasoned foundation for the teaching that the First Cause alone is the Creator that gives being to each and every thing, directly to intellect which is its first effect and mediately through intellect to soul, nature and all the rest of created things. Other causes act by giving form, but only the First Cause is the cause of being.[45] This philosophical account of primary causality, an account of creation as found in the *Circle of al-Kindi*, shows that the study of philosophy yields a conception of God as Creator without easily apparent discordance with the religious understanding that Allah[46] is the unitary Creator whose *Tawḥīd* or absolute unity permeates and grounds all other things in unity and being.[47] This metaphysical account found in the *Circle of al-Kindi* is part of what Gerhard Endress has insightfully described as part of a

> programme *de propaganda philosophia*, which came into being as an ideology of scientists heirs to the Hellenistic Encyclopaedia, and as a religion for intellectuals compatible with Islam, … a programme for the integration of philosophy and the rational sciences into Muslim Arab society.[48]

It is precisely this that al-Kindī was proposing in his argument for the establishment of a central role for the foreign science of philosophy in the Islamic religious context of Baghdad. In his *On First Philosophy* he reasoned against unnamed detractors that room should be made for the study of philosophy inside the lands of Islam since philosophy too pursues knowledge of Divine *Tawhīd* and creation. His reasoning is that philosophy should not be seen as an adversary to Islam but a co-ordinate and perhaps even co-equal way to seek out the fullest understanding of God and His creation. To this extent philosophy is properly seen as a companion to the religious teachings of Islam, sharing in the same end. In establishing the meaning and role of philosophy he writes,

> The most noble philosophy of the highest degree is the first philosophy, by which I mean the knowledge of the first truth who is the cause of all

45 *Arabic De causis* chapter 17. *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 213–216. Cf. *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift*, p. 92–93; *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*, p. 19.

46 See *Arabic De causis*, chapter 22, the sole chapter in which we find *Allāh*. *The Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥd al-khair*), p. 235–238. Cf. *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift*, p. 100–101; *Al-Aflāṭūnīya*, p. 23–24.

47 On *tawḥid* in the philosophical context, see Wakelnig 2015. Whether this account is fully in accord with literal accounts in the Abrahamic religions is another question to be addressed elsewhere.

48 Endress 2000, p. 569.

> truth. The complete and most noble philosopher is therefore necessarily the man who comprehends this most noble knowledge, because the knowledge of the cause is more noble than the knowledge of the effect. For we only know each of the effects completely when we comprehend the knowledge of its cause.[49]

He then goes on to explain the nature of the causes and to indicate that the term "first philosophy" is used of "the knowledge of the First Cause." Such knowledge is obligatory since it offers inroads to knowledge and truth, regardless of its sources or previous practitioners in philosophy, inroads immensely valuable for the understanding of God and His creatures.

> By knowing the things in their true nature, one knows divinity (*rubūbiya*), oneness (*waḥdāniya*), virtue, and, in general (*jumlatan*) everything beneficial and how to obtain it, and how to stay away from, and protect oneself against, all harm. The way to acquire all these is what the true prophets brought from God, great be His praise. For the true prophets (may God's blessings be upon them) brought the assurance that God alone is divine, and made [us] adhere to the virtues that are pleasing to Him, whilst forsaking the vices that are essentially opposed to the virtues and preferring the latter [to the former].[50]

He then concludes his opening apologia for philosophy, writing,

> We beseech Him who can see into our hearts—who knows our efforts to establish a proof of His divinity, to show His oneness, and to drive away those who stubbornly resist and disbelieve Him through proofs that refute their unbelief, tear aside the veils of their infamies and declare openly the deficiencies of their destructive creeds—to protect us and those who follow our path by fortifying us with His unceasing might; to dress us in His shielding and protective armour; and to grant us the aid of the edge of His piercing sword, and the support of His mightily victorious strength, so that He may thereby let us reach the end of our intention in aiding the truth and supporting what is right, and so that He may put us in the same rank as those whose intention He favours, whose action He approves, and to whom He gives triumph and victory over His opponents

49 Al-Kindi, *The Philosophical Works*, p. 10.
50 Al-Kindi, *The Philosophical Works*, p. 13.

> who do not believe in His grace, and who deviate from the path of truth that is pleasing to Him.[51]

The first chapter and much more of the *Arabic De causis*,[52] should be viewed in the context of this project by al-Kindi. What we find in that first proposition and others that follow are extracts from the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus chosen carefully to support a philosophical account of creative causality that may be read to coordinate well with broadly Abrahamic religious doctrine. That God is found causally present throughout all things of the universe, a religious doctrine common to the Abrahamic religious traditions, is reflected in the Qur'an in *Surat Qaf* [50:16] "And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein."[53] In the first chapter of the *Arabic De causis* the author uses the texts of Proclus to reason for the presence of any primary cause throughout all that it causes even down to the most remote of its effects. This is expressed as a principle to be followed throughout the work. This doctrine of primary causality insists that, in a hierarchy of causes and effects, no matter how remote the ultimate effect may be from the first cause in the hierarchy, the first cause is more intimately present to the effect than even the lowest and most proximate cause of the effect. This is because the First Cause, later in the *Arabic De causis* identified with Pure Being and the Pure True One, provides being as the formal substrate to which additional formalities can be added. In this sense the First Cause is the paradigmatic cause of the participated perfections of being and the unity in all things while Itself remaining transcendent. Again, this causality is not that of any of the four Aristotelian causes that largely concern the sublunar realm; nor is it the efficient causality of the Necessary Being according to Avicenna. Rather, it is that of a paradigmatic cause, Pure Being, causing lower things to have in themselves a much diminished formal characteristic of being as the foundation making possible additional formalities such as life and rationality. The doctrine is, of course, metaphysical since the being of the effect and the being and causal activity of all the intermediate causes are only owing to the first cause in the series. Spelled out philosophically in the first proposition of the *Arabic De causis* and others to follow, this is precisely what al-Kindī expressed as philosophy's coordinate role in the explanation of the nature and activity of the First Truth, God. Hence, the first proposition of this work on primary causality in

51 Al-Kindi, *The Philosophical Works*, p. 13–14.

52 See D'Ancona 1999.

53 https://quran.com/50/16.

conjunction with the later explicit discussions of creation and the identification of the First Cause with God provides a fine instance what al-Kindī referred to as a proper role for philosophy in the context of Islam. It is a philosophical text easily read as consonant with religious understandings of the Divinity and Its causality and as such constitutes a proof and example of the value of philosophy to the apprehension of the meaning of Divine *Tawḥīd*.[54]

3 Concluding Remarks

The first of the two contexts of the *Arabic De Causis* presented here is that of the author as a follower of the *Circle of al-Kindi*'s new form of Aristotelianism developed through a transformed understanding of texts from Plotinus, *Enneads* 4, 5 & 6. He is himself forming a philosophical creationist account compatible if not supplemental to the thought expressed in the *Plotiniana Arabica*. The second context is that of a treatise formed to be congruent with Islam or generally Abrahamic considerations as part of the agenda of what Endress labelled a "programme *de propaganda philosophia*." The contexts of the *Arabic De causis* considered here were unknown to the many hundreds of readers of the twelfth century Latin translation and to the authors of dozens of Latin commentaries. Rather, Latin thinkers for perhaps as long as 90 or more years had no evidence for it to be anything but an Aristotelian treatise. For that period and even well beyond the revelation by Aquinas of its use of the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus, Latin thinkers found the *Latin De causis* to be an invaluable source of principles, analyses and arguments for a Latin form of Aristotelianism in many philosophical and theological studies, as Dragos Calma has shown.[55] Yet, as I have suggested here, the *Arabic De causis* is much more than an assemblage of extracts from the *Elements of Theology*. Read in its proper contexts, it is rather a philosophical product of the "Aristotelian" *Circle of al-Kindi* thoughtfully crafted in its reasoning and arguably aimed to contribute to the early positive reception of philosophy into the religious and cultural context of Islam in ninth century Baghdad.

54 For a more substantial study of al-Kindi's philosophical thought in his *On First Philosophy* and its importance in historical and religious context, see the valuable analyses in Gannagé 2017.

55 Calma 2016.

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CHAPTER 11

La présence du *Liber de causis* dans l'œuvre d'Ibn Bāǧǧa et pseudo-Ibn Bāǧǧa: un philosophe péripatéticien du XI^e/XII^e siècle de l'Occident islamique

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Les études sur le *Liber de causis* ont suscité un grand intérêt et connu un grand succès parmi les arabisants médiévistes modernes. Pourtant, la majorité des chercheurs se sont focalisés sur l'héritage de la philosophie arabe dans l'Orient islamique, ce qui est tout à fait justifié si on prend en considération le poids du néoplatonisme dans la philosophie des grands maîtres philosophes de l'Orient. Mais qu'en est-il de l'Occident islamique ?

En investiguant sur le nom de Proclus et le *Liber de causis* (*Fī al-ḫayr al-maḥḍ*) chez les plus importants chroniqueurs de l'Occident islamique du X^e au XII^e siècle (Ibn Ǧulǧul 994 a.c et Ṣā'id 1070 a.c), on ne trouve aucune mention de Proclus et de ses œuvres. Pourtant les premiers ouvrages de philosophie rédigés en Occident islamique subissent l'influence du néoplatonisme, notamment du *Jardin de sagesse* d'Isḥāq al-Isrā'īlī (932a.c), du *Ġāyat al-ḥakīm* attribué à Maslama al-Maǧrīṭī (1007a.c)[1], de la *Source de la vie* d'Ibn Gabirol (1058a.c) ainsi que de *Kitāb al-ḥadā'iq* d'Ibn al-Sīd al-Batalyawsī (1127a.c), mais sans aucune mention explicite de Proclus ou du *Liber de causis*.

En travaillant sur Ibn Bāǧǧa, connu dans le monde latin par le nom d'Avempace (1139 a.c), et considéré comme le premier philosophe péripatéticien en Occident islamique[2] et maître indirect du grand commentateur d'Aristote Ibn Rušd, je me suis focalisé sur la présence et l'influence du néoplatonisme dans son corpus philosophique. Dans cette contribution, je présente une première esquisse des résultats de cette enquête et des questions soulevées. Je me suis d'abord interrogé sur la présence explicite ou tacite de Proclus et du

1 Je remercie mon collègue Med Boughali pour cette information transmise lors du colloque *Le néoplatonisme dans l'occident islamique* organisé par le laboratoire PPSS (Philosophie et Patrimoine dans la Société du Savoir) à l'Université Cadi Ayyad (Marrakech, Maroc), en 2017.

2 Pour plus de détails voir Rachak 2017b.

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Liber de causis dans les œuvres d'Ibn Bāğğa. Celui-ci, comme tout autre philosophe, se réfère aux doctrines et aux philosophes anciens. Il cite Aristote et ses œuvres connus dans la tradition arabe, Platon (surtout *Phédon* et *la République*), Galien, Alexandre d'Aphrodise, Themistius, Jean Philopon, Al-Fārābī, Al-Ġazālī (quatre fois). Dans toutes ses références, il reste fidèle à Aristote et à l'école péripatéticienne. Le corpus d'Ibn Bāğğa se compose de soixante-trois titres et se divise en trois grandes parties[3], une qui porte sur la logique et les mathématiques, une qui porte sur la philosophie naturelle ou la physique et une autre qui porte sur l'éthique, la métaphysique et l'âme. On peut remarquer la présence de quelques idées de Proclus dans la partie de l'œuvre qui se compose des écrits classés après *Kitāb al-nafs* (traité de l'âme), qui sont au nombre de dix:

1. Le *Tadbīr* (*Le régime du solitaire* ou *La conduite de l'isolé*)
2. *Épître de l'adieu*
3. *Annexe de l'Épître de l'adieu*
4. *De la faculté appétitive* 1
5. *De la faculté appétitive* 2
6. *Traité de la fin humaine*
7. *De l'unité et de l'Un*
8. Du mobile
9. Les choses au moyen desquelles on peut connaître l'intellect agent.
10. *Épître de la conjonction de l'intellect avec l'homme*

On reconnaît la présence de Proclus dans l'œuvre d'Ibn Bāğğa par le biais d'un pseudo Alexandre d'Aphrodise. Ibn Bāğğa se réfère à l'œuvre intitulée *Fī al-ṣuwar al-rūḥāniyya* (*Des formes spirituelles*) deux fois par le nom et deux fois par le thème[4] de la conversion réflexive de l'intellect. Lorsque Ibn Bāğğa évoque *Fī al-ṣuwar al-rūḥāniyya* (*Des formes spirituelles*), il l'attribue à Alexandre d'Aphrodise, alors que le texte est de Proclus[5]. Ibn Bāğğa est victime donc d'une erreur historique, une erreur de fausse attribution, et si le néoplatonisme s'est introduit dans son corpus et ses idées, cela s'est fait de manière involontaire et sans s'en rendre compte. Ibn Bāğğa a voulu rester toujours fidèle à l'école péripatéticienne dont Alexandre est l'un des plus célèbres représen-

3 Il est essentiel de souligner que Ǧ. al-ʿAlawī est le premier à établir cette répartition dans son ouvrage: *Muʾallafāt Ibn Bāğğa* (al-ʿAlawī, 1983a), Par la suite, la majorité des chercheurs ont adopté cette même division. Pour plus d'informations, voir Rachak 2017a, p. 159-162.

4 al-ʿAlawī 1983b, p. 156, 182, 186, 193. Fakhry, 1991, p. 166: وكان على ما يقوله الاسكندر في كتابه الصور الروحانية راجع على نفسه، ص "wa kāna ʿalā mā yaqūl-uhu al-Iskandar fī kitāb-ihi fī al-ṣṣuwar rrūhāniya rāǧiʿ ʿalā nafsih".

5 Pinès 1955, Lewin 1955, Endress 1973.

tants. Mais est-ce que le néoplatonisme se manifeste seulement par ce texte faussement attribué à Alexandre, le *Fī al-ṣuwar al-rūḥāniyya*, ou peut-on identifier d'autres éléments dans l'œuvre de Bağğa ?

Ibn Bāǧǧa confie à son disciple et ami Ibn al-Imām au début de l'épître *De la conjonction* (*Risālat al-ittiṣāl*) qu'il lui parle de quelque chose de neuf, à savoir de la conjonction[6], et que les seuls à avoir traité ou juste débuté à traiter d'une telle idée sont Aristote dans le onzième livre de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque* et Fārābī dans sa paraphrase de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque* d'Aristote.[7] L'*Éthique* d'Aristote est en dix livres, mais dans la tradition arabe il comporte onze livres. Le thème de la conjonction est absent dans le onzième livre de la version arabe[8], ce qui nous laisse supposer qu'il pouvait songer à la paraphrase de Porphyre à l'*Éthique à Nicomaque*, perdu en arabe[9]. Celui-ci est en douze livres, et Ibn Bāǧǧa aurait pu le considérer comme un texte authentique d'Aristote. Et si c'est le cas, alors Ibn Bāǧǧa de nouveau est sous l'influence du néoplatonisme sans s'en rendre compte. Une telle suggestion reste hypothétique en l'absence de toute autre attestation. J'ajoute aussi qu'Ibn Bāǧǧa mentionne à deux reprises Hermès dans l'*Éthique à Nicomaque*[10], mais ce nom n'apparaît pas dans la version arabe de l'œuvre d'Aristote.

Ibn Bāǧǧa essaie de rester fidèle à Aristote dans ses idées et sa terminologie, même s'il utilise parfois un vocabulaire issu du corpus religieux (*ḥadīṯ* et *Coran*). On peut aussi ajouter des locutions et citations d'Ibn Bāǧǧa qui rappellent le néoplatonisme islamisé, même s'il essaye de rester à l'écart. Il a certainement lu l'épître *Risālafī al-ʿilm al-ilāhī* faussement attribuée à al-Fārābī[11] :

> C'est par les actes corporels que l'homme existe, par les actes spirituels qu'il est noble, et par les actes intellectuels qu'il est divin et excellent. Celui qui possède la sagesse est donc nécessairement un homme excellent et divin, il prend de chaque acte la meilleure partie, participe de chaque classe d'hommes pour les meilleurs états qui leur sont propre et se distingue d'eux par les actes meilleurs et les plus nobles. Lorsqu'il a atteint la fin la plus haute, et cela en pensant les intellects simples et

6 Déjà l'idée de la conjonction de l'homme avec l'Intellect (ou l'Intellect agent), d'après Cristina d'Ancona et d'autres, est néoplatonicienne. (Voir d'Ancona 2008).

7 Genequand 2010, introduction p. 89, § 3-4.

8 Badawi 1979.

9 Ibn Nadīm 2009. Cette paraphrase est perdue même en grecque.

10 Fakhry 1991, p. 68, 128.

11 Badawi 1955, introduction.

> substantiels qui sont mentionnés dans la *Métaphysique*, dans le *Livre de l'âme* et dans le *Livre du sens et du sensible*, il est alors l'un des intellects et il est juste de dire de lui qu'il est seulement divin, les attributs du corporel éphémère lui sont retirés ainsi que les attributs du spirituel élevé, et seul l'attribut de divin et simple lui convient.[12]

> Bien plus, c'est une chose existante qui se produit quand on se la présente, et par laquelle l'homme se met à exister d'une autre sorte d'existence que celle qui appartient à ses autres facultés. Cette faculté devient l'un des existants divins et l'homme arrive aussi près que possible de Dieu Béni et Très-Haut ; il obtient son approbation et des biens divins innombrables. Il sort de l'obscurité pure qui est l'état des animaux irrationnels.[13]

> Il est évident que cet intellect qui est la récompense et la grâce divine et l'égard de ceux de ces serviteurs dont il est satisfait. Ce n'est donc pas le récompensé ou le châtié, mais la récompense et la grâce pour l'ensemble des facultés de l'âme. La récompense et le châtiment concerne l'âme appétitive, qui fait le mal et le bien. Mais celui qui obéit à Dieu et fait ce qui Lui plaît, il le récompense de cet intellect et place devant lui une lumière qui le guide. Celui qui le désobéit et fait ce qui ne Lui plaît pas, Il le voile à ses yeux, et celui-là reste dans les ténèbres de l'ignorance accumulées sur lui jusqu'à ce qu'il quitte son corps, séparé de lui et marchant dans Sa réprobation. Ce sont là des degrés qui ne sont pas atteints par la réflexion, et c'est pourquoi Dieu complète leur connaissance par la révélation. Celui à qui Il donne cet intellect, lorsqu'il quitte le corps, demeure lumière parmi les lumières, louant et glorifiant Dieu avec les prophètes, les justes, les martyrs et les bons que Dieu à favorisés : quels excellents compagnons.[14]

Cette partie du corpus de Bāǧǧa ne contient pas de référence explicite à Proclus et au *Liber de causis*. Les épîtres dites *Aqwāl* sont, de ce point de vue, un terrain plus fertile à explorer. Ce sont treize fragments sans titres préservés seulement dans le recueil d'Ibn al-Imām (ms. d'Oxford), alors que l'on connaît trois témoins manuscrits importants des œuvres d'Ibn Bāǧǧa : l'un conservé à Oxford en calligraphe orientale, l'autre à Berlin et l'autre à la bibliothèque de d'Escurial, en calligraphe andalouse (*maġribī*).

12 Genequand 2010, § 164-165, p. 163-164.
13 Genequand 2010, § 80, p. 114.
14 Genequand 2010, § 23-24, p. 190-191.

Ces épîtres ont, pour la première fois, fait l'objet d'une édition et d'une importante étude critique de Ǧ. al-ʿAlawī[15], qui a fini par douter de leur authenticité. Il a appuyé sa conclusion par des arguments très convaincants, dont je cite seulement les quatre les plus importants :

1. La contradiction frappante entre les idées de ces épîtres et celles exprimées dans le reste du corpus de Bāǧǧa.
2. L'homonymie entre les termes de ces épîtres et ceux du reste du corpus, le ton des premières étant néoplatonicien, émanatiste et soufi, le ton des seconds étant aristotélicien et farabien.
3. La présence des références à des ouvrages étrangers au corpus de Bāǧǧa, à savoir : le *Liber de causis* (*Al-ḫayr al-maḥḍ*), le *Miškāt al-anwār* d'al-Ġazālī et le *ʿUyūn al-masāil* d'al-Fārābī.
4. Ibn Bāǧǧa critique dans son corpus Ġazālī et les soufis à trois reprises[16], alors que les épîtres font l'éloge d'al-Ġazālī et des soufis[17].

Il faut noter qu'al-ʿAlawī a beaucoup hésité avant de trancher la question. La raison en est qu'en étudiant ces épîtres, il présente les difficultés, notamment les différences entre ces épîtres et parfois au sein de la même épître, d'un paragraphe à l'autre. Il a conclu son étude en considérant ces épîtres comme un ensemble, tout en doutant de leur authenticité. Fayyūmī a donné suite à ce débat dans son livre intitulé *Al-falsafa fī al-Maġrib*[18], mais il a opté en faveur de l'authenticité de l'ensemble de ces épîtres, tout en essayant de répondre à certains arguments avancés par al-ʿAlawī et en relevant d'autres, précédemment ignorés.

La question principale est de déterminer l'authenticité de ces épîtres. Dans mon article intitulé *De l'authenticité des fragments d'Ibn Bāǧǧa*[19], j'ai proposé une troisième hypothèse selon laquelle ces lettres témoignent d'une correspondance entre Ibn Bāǧǧa, qui se trouvait au Maroc à Fès, et son ami et disciple Ibn al-Imām, qui se trouvait en Egypte à Qaws. Et je note la présence d'Ibn al-Imām en Egypte, c'est-à-dire dans l'Orient islamique où le *Liber de causis* était bien connu au XII^e^ siècle, et la présence d'Ibn Bāǧǧa dans l'Occident islamique où le *Liber de causis* était moins connu ou, tout au moins, il n'était pas explicitement cité.

Dans la présente contribution, je veux montrer l'importance dans ces épîtres de la présence de Proclus et le néoplatonisme à travers le *Kitāb fī al-*

15 al-ʿAlawī 1983b.
16 Fakhry 1991, p. 55, 121, 124.
17 al-ʿAlawī 1983b, p. 159.
18 Fayyūmī 1988, p. 369-387.
19 Rachak 2014.

ḫayr al-maḥḍ. Je commence par les citations qui réfèrent explicitement au *Liber de causis*:

Titres pour le *Liber de causis*:
ʾīḍāḥ al-ḫayr
Maqālāt al-ḫayr

وانظره في "إيضاح الخير" تجده، ففيه أبواب كثيرة في الخير. وأظنه الذي يسمى بمقالات الخير، فإن كان كل باب منه قول في الخير.

Les propositions sont nommées: bāb (singulier) et abwāb (pluriel)

فهذا ما ظهر لي فيما تجاذبناه. ولقد واليت النظر في أبوابه، فانكشف لي نور بين وعلم يقين، فلا أقدر أن أفارقه، ولقد علقت عليه، بين الحكيم والوزير[20]، ص. 99

Le *Liber de causis* est du même rang que le *ʿUyūn al-masāʾil* d'al-Fārābī, le *Miškāt al-anwār* d'al-Ġazālī; et tous les trois sont en harmonie avec le Coran.

وانظر مع نظرك في مقالات الخير، في "عيون المسائل"، ثم في قول أبي حامد، تجد الكل من نمط واحد، والكل في التأويل مع الكتاب العزيز متفق. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 99

Titre du *Liber de causis*, prop. 104, 105 et 106.

وكرر النظر والتثبت في أبواب "إيضاح الخير" تتيقن كيف ذلك، ولا سيما في الباب الرابع والمائة، والباب الخامس والمائة، والباب السادس والمائة. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 105

Le *Liber de causis* est mentionné par le titre dans les épîtres que j'ai attribuées à Ibn al-Imām, qui se trouvait en Egypte, et c'est bien clair que le sujet de la correspondance était la perpétuité de l'intellect et l'ultime bonheur. L'auteur (Ibn al-Imām) déclare solennellement qu'il a découvert une vérité certaine, dotée d'une lumière éclatante après avoir lu et relu à maintes reprises et délibérément le livre d'*Al-ḫayr al-maḥḍ* et ces différents *abwāb* (propositions), au point qu'il n'arrive plus à s'en séparer et ne cesse de presser Ibn Bāğğa à le lire. Il précise également qu'il a commenté *Al-ḫayr al-maḥḍ* (le *Liber de causis*), et probablement ces épîtres sont le fruit de ce commentaire.

Mais il faut se demander s'il s'agit du même *Al-ḫayr* que nous connaissons dans les éditions de Badawi et de Taylor[21], ou bien d'une autre version. Dans l'épître onze (de l'édition Al-ʿalawī), l'auteur, après avoir développé dans le

20 Rachak 2017.
21 Taylor 1981. Bardenhewer 1882. Badawi 1977.

premier paragraphe la question de la hiérarchie des intellects descendants du premier jusqu'au dernier – qui est l'intellect humain –, incite son interlocuteur à lire et à examiner *abwāb ʾīḍāḥ Al-ḫayr* (« les propositions du *Liber de causis* »), notamment les propositions 104, 105 et 106, au sujet de cette hiérarchie. Cette référence est particulièrement importante parce que :

1. c'est la première fois, sauf erreur de ma part, que l'on se réfère explicitement dans un texte arabe à la numérotation des propositions du *De causis*.
2. ces propositions du *Liber de causis* ne semblent pas provenir directement des *Éléments de théologie* de Proclus[22].
3. ce thème de la hiérarchie des intellects ne se trouvent pas dans les *Éléments de théologie* de Proclus[23].
4. l'auteur de l'épître considère sur le même rang l'autorité du *Liber de causis* et le Coran quant à la question de la perpétuité et de l'ultime bonheur de l'homme.
5. enfin, si l'on prend en considération le prologue d'Ibn al-Naḍr (le copiste du ms. d'Oxford), alors ces épîtres doivent être copiées en 1152 a.c. On considère généralement que la première référence en Orient islamique au *Kitāb al-ḫayr al-maḥḍ* remonte à Muwaffaq al-Dīn al-Baġdādī (m. 1231 a.c) et en Occident islamique à Ibn Sabʿīn (m. 1269 a.c). Mais si l'on admet que ces fragments sont la correspondance entre Ibn al-Imām et Ibn Bāğğa, alors le *terminus ante quem* est 1139 a.c, année du décès d'Ibn Baāğğa. Il s'en suivrait alors, que cette référence à *Îdāḥ al-ḫayr* est la plus ancienne actuellement connue.

Voici la liste des références au *Liber de causis* et à d'autres thèses néoplatoniciennes :

Les sphères actives n'agissent pas sur les sphères passives que d'après sa (i.e. l'Un / le Premier) volonté. Ainsi, lorsqu'il a voulu ce qui est dans le monde, il a émané ce savoir sur ses anges et par l'intermédiaire de ces	محرك الأجرام الفاعلة بإرادته إلى أن تفعل ما يريده في الأجرام المنفعلة كما أنه لما أراد أن نعلم ما يحدثه في العالم أفاض [...] على الملائكة علم ذلك، ومن ملائكته يفيض ذلك العلم على عقول الانسان،

22 *La demeure de l'être*, p. 29.

23 La proposition 106 correspond au chapitre XXXI d'après ce tableau, à savoir que le thème de la proposition XXXI est l'intermédiaire entre une intelligence dont la substance et l'activité sont dans l'éternité et une intelligence dont la substance et l'activité sont dans le temps. Cet intermédiaire est une chose dont la substance est dans l'éternité et l'activité dans le temps. (Voir : *La demeure de l'être*, p. 83).

فيدركه انسان انسان بحسب ما وهبه من الاستعداد لقبوله. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 82

derniers émane ce savoir sur les intellects humains, ces derniers le perçoivent chacun selon la disposition qui lui a été accordée.

وبذلك يكون فعله في ذاته بذاته، وفعله هو أن يرى ببصيرة عقله وعمله يقينا، وبذلك يرجع على ذاته بذاته فيكون الراجع والمرجوع إليه واحدا كما قال الاسكندر، فيكون روحانيا لا جسمانيا.

... ainsi l'intellect agit sur soi-même, son acte est de percevoir une certitude grâce à... et de ce fait il retourne sur soi par soi-même, c'est la conversion de l'intellect comme l'a annoncé Alexandre, donc l'intellect est spirituel et non corporel. (al-ʿAlawī, 156)

أن يعقل ويعلم لا يحتاج إلى شيء مادة هي سبب الفساد، وإنما حاجته إلى العقل الذي أوجده بما يفيض عليه، كحاجة سائر العقول العالية إلى العقل الذي فوقها وهو الذي أوجدها. والأعلى يُفيضُ على الذي على الذي دونه دائما، والكل من السبب الأول على ترتيب. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 92–93

2. Pour savoir et intelliger, (l'Un / le Premier) n'a pas besoin d'une matière corruptible, mais plutôt Il a besoin de l'Intellect qu'il a créé.

فأرى أن تمزج ما عندك من الكمال التعليمي بذكر الله عز وجل، وبالفكرة في كماله، وبما عندك من اليقين بوجوده، وأنه عالم، وأن علمه بذاته فقط، فعلمه هو ذاته، فإنه يعلم جميع الأسباب من جهة علمه بذاته وبكمال ذاته التي بكمالها فاض وجود ذلك الموجود، وأنه عالم بما فاض عنه، ولعلمه بذاته فيعلم ما يفيض عنه. فاعمل تصفية نفسك بذكر الله وتعظيمه بصفاته على ما ذكره الشيخ أبو نصر في كتاب الملة. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 95

L'émanation : Dieu comme source d'émanation.

Le don suprême consiste dans la disposition de recevoir ce qui est la perfection de l'homme et de recevoir aussi l'intellect de l'homme, puis l'intellect divin, qui est l'intellect acquis de Dieu.

الفطرة الفائقة المعدة لقبول الكمال الإنساني هي المعدة لقبول العقل الإنساني، ثم لقبول عقل إلهي وهو عقل مستفاد من الله عز وجل.

وهذه الموهبة من الله عز وجل، التي بصائر القلوب،

تتفاضل في الإنسان تفاضلا عظيما. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 85

Le premier connaît les particuliers d'après sa connaissance de leurs définitions.

ومن بعض ما ذكرته أن الأول يعلم الجزئيات من جهة علمه بحدودها. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 100

Les intellects seconds, le premier al-awwal Dieu.

وأما الثواني (العقول) ففعلها في عقولها دائما وذلك بأن تعقل ما في عقلها دائما، وذلك بأن تعقل في ذاتها الأول، وكيف حصلت جميع الموجودات عنه بحسب مراتبها منه. والأول لا إلاه غيره يعقل ذاته فقط على كمالها. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 97

L'intellect agent avec l'aide des corps célestes est l'agent proche des individus dans monde de la génération et de la corruption.

والعقل الفعال بمعونة الأجرام السماوية هو الفاعل القريب في جزئيات الكون والفساد. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 102

La conversion de l'intellect sur soi

... ومن جهات البرهان في بقاء العقل أن تلتفت أبدا إلى بصيرة قلبك حتى تفنى تلك البصيرة، وهي التي تحوز بها المعقولات، وتراها بها كما ترى بصر

L'exemple de la vision des couleurs par l'œil et l'éclairage du soleil.

العين نور الشمس الذي نرى به الملونات، حتى نرى بتلك البصيرة المعقولات، ونثبتها في العقل، ونتيقن

Très proche de ce qui se lit dans *Risāla fī al-ʿilm al-ilāhī* attribué à al-Fārābī

وجودها وصدقها في العقل، حتى يكون الراجع والمرجوع إليه شيئا واحدا. بين الحكيم والوزير، ص. 104–103

Les termes qu'utilise Ibn Bāğğa dans ses œuvres authentiques

perspicacité	Al-basīra البصيرة
lumière du soleil	Nūr al-Šams نور الشمس
don (divin)	Al-mawhiba al-ilāhiyya الموهبة الإلهية
don suprême	Al-fitra al-fāiqa الفطرة الفائقة
émanation (répété 30 fois)	Al-fayḍ الفيض
intelligibles premiers	Al-maʿqūlāt al-uwal المعقولات الأول
intellects seconds	Al-maʿqūlāt al-tawānī المعقولات الثواني
intellect divin	ʿaql ilāhī العقل الإلهي

le Premier (répété 17 fois)	Al-awwal الأول
intellects seconds (répété 6 fois)	Al-tawānī الثواني
lumière de l'intellect	Nūr al-ʿaql نور العقل
conversion sur soi de l'intellect (dans 4 épîtres)	Al-rāǧiʿ wa-l-marǧūʿ الراجع والمرجوع
éternité	Al-dahr الدهر
anges	Al-malāʾika الملائكة
disposé pour recevoir	Al-istiʿdād li-qabūl الاستعداد لقبول

L'ensemble de ces épîtres témoignent de la présence d'un néoplatonisme islamisé compatible avec l'idée de l'Un (Dieu), premier créateur, et des anges comme intermédiaires, sans négliger des thèses aristotéliciennes. Ce ne sont que quelques paragraphes, des exemples, tirés de ces épîtres, qui témoignent de la densité et du poids du néoplatonisme transmis par le *Liber de causis*, ensemble avec *ʿUyūn al-masāil* attribué à al-Fārābī, le *Miškāt al-anwār* d'al-Ġazālī, accommodés avec le *Coran*.

Pour finir, cette brève contribution n'est qu'une esquisse pour montrer

1. l'importante présence du *Liber de causis* dans ces épîtres. Ces références nécessitent une comparaison plus détaillée avec les versions arabes connue du *Liber de causis*, des traductions de Plotin et de Pseudo-Alexandre.
2. la référence aux propositions par leurs numéros : le *Liber de causis* arabe est divisé en *abwāb* (chapitres), alors que la traduction arabe des *Éléments de théologie* est divisée en propositions numérotées.
3. la nécessité d'examiner de plus près l'hypothèse qu'Ibn Bāǧǧa ne voulait pas accepter la voie du néoplatonisme, si l'on admet que ces lettres sont effectivement le fruit de sa correspondance avec Ibn al-Imām.
4. l'immense intérêt que présente aujourd'hui l'étude approfondie de la présence du néoplatonisme dans l'Occident islamique.

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PART 4

The Latin West

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CHAPTER 12

Three Double Translations from Arabic into Latin by Gerard of Cremona and Dominicus Gundisalvi

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Among the many philosophical translations from Arabic into Latin in twelfth-century Spain, there are some that were translated twice, notably Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, Alfarabi's *Enumeration of the Sciences* and Isaac Israeli's *On Definitions and Descriptions*.[1] It has often been suggested that the two translators of these three texts were Gerard of Cremona and Dominicus Gundisalvi, the two contemporaries and canons of Toledo cathedral in the later twelfth century. The first part of this paper musters the evidence for these ascriptions in the manuscripts of the translations, that is, in the titles and colophons, and also considers translator attributions in other medieval texts, such as the well-known list of translations by Gerard of Cremona drawn up by his *socii*.[2]

In all three cases, many verbal parallels between the two translations show that one translation is a revision of the other. But it is not clear which version was first. In the second part of the paper, I shall propose a philological solution to this question.

I will also be concerned with a fourth text, the *Liber de causis*. Of this famous text, which in Arabic is called *The Discourse on the Pure Good* (*Kalām fī maḥḍ al-ḫayr*), there exists only one version by the translator Gerard of Cremona. But it has been argued that this version is in fact the result of a stylistic revision by another translator, Dominicus Gundisalvi.[3] I shall come back to this question at the end of this paper.

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1 I am grateful for advice from Stefan Georges and Andreas Büttner.

2 For this list see Burnett 2001.

3 Adriaan Pattin, editor of the 1966 edition of the Latin *Liber de causis*, has argued that the translation by Gerard of Cremona was revised by Dominicus Gundisalvi. He claims that the vocabulary of Gundisalvi is evident in two cases: in the term *intellectibilis* and in the phrase *habent essentiam* (Pattin 1966, p. 98). Richard Taylor has argued that this evidence is not conclusive: "There is no evidence to suggest in any substantial way that the translation of the Liber de causis was systematically revised by anyone" (Taylor 1988, p. 80). I am not convinced

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1 The Manuscript Evidence: Titles and Translators

In what follows, I shall discuss the manuscript evidence for Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, Alfarabi's *On the Sciences* and Isaac's *On Definitions* in sequence, focusing on the titles and translators named in the manuscripts. The first text is Alkindi's *On the Intellect* (*Risāla fī l-ʿaql*). This short text, whose main sources are Aristotle, Alexander of Aphrodisias and John Philoponos, discusses four different kinds of intellect, one outside and three inside the soul. This doctrine influenced later authors such as Alfarabi and Avicenna, but also the scholastic discussion.[4] The two Latin translations of Alkindi's *On the Intellect* were edited in 1897 by Albino Nagy. One translation, with the incipit *Intellexi quod quesivisti de scribendo sermonem*, was edited by Nagy with the subtitle "translatum a magistro Gerardo Cremonensi". The other translation, with the incipit *Intellexi quod queris scribi tibi sermonem*, was edited without any mentioning of the translator. The first translation uses *ratio* for rendering the Arabic term *ʿaql* ('intellect'), the second *intellectus*. Nagy's ascription of the *De ratione* translation to Gerard of Cremona is based on the evidence of one manuscript, as the table below shows. I have tried to check as many titles, colophons, incipts and explicits as possible in a reasonable time by turning to Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny's *Codices* volume in the Avicenna Latinus series and to the online indices *In principio*, *Manus Online* and *Manuscripta mediaevalia*.

of the *intellectibilis* argument by Pattin, since the only occurrence of *intellectibilis* in Gundisalvi's translations is one sentence in Avicenna's *De anima* on *principiis intellectibilibus*, where an alternative reading is *principiis intelligibilibus* (see Van Riet 1968–1972, vol. II, p. 153, manuscript V). For more information on the Latin translation see d'Ancona, Taylor 2003, p. 610–617.

4 On this work see Adamson 2007, p. 118–127; Rudolph 2012, p. 109.

1.1 *Alkindi,* On the Intellect / De ratione[5]

Incipit: *Intellexi quod quesivisti de scribendo sermonem …*
Explicit: *… sermo enuntiativus sufficiat.*

at least eight manuscripts

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Admont, Stiftsbibliothek, 578, f. 34v	Tractatus Alpharabii de modis acceptionum huius nominis ratio	–
Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, W.66, f. 240v–241v	Expositio intellectus secundum sententiam Platonis et Aristotelis	–
Brugge, Hoofdbibliotheek Biekorf, 424, f. 309r	–	–
Bruxelles, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, II 2558, f. 99r–v	Incipit liber de ratione sive de formis rationis	Explicit liber de ratione sive de formis rationis
Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Soppr. G. 4. 354, f. 111v	–	–
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 217, f. 115v	–	–
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 6443, f. 190r	Verbum Iacob Alkindi de intentione antiquorum in ratione translatum a magistro Gerardo Cremonensi	–
Roma, Biblioteca Angelica, 242, f. 18r	Incipit verbum Iacob Alchindi de ratione	Explicit verbum Iacob Alchindi de intentione antiquorum in ratione

5 See the MSS listed by Nagy 1897, p. XXX–XXXI.

The translator Gerard of Cremona is mentioned in only one manuscript. I am not aware of any significant external evidence; most importantly, the translation is not mentioned in the *socii*'s list of Gerard's translations. The ascription to Gerard of Cremona is not unreasonable, but needs to be treated with some caution; it will find support from the stylistic arguments below.

The other translation does not give the name of a translator in the 21 manuscripts available to me. Its title is *De intellectu et intellecto* or simply *De intellectu*.

1.2 *Alkindi,* On the Intellect / De intellectu et intellecto

Incipit: *Intellexi quod queris* (*tibi scribi*) *sermonem* …
Explicit: … *tantum sermonis de hoc sufficiat*.

at least twenty-one manuscripts

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Cava de' Tirreni, Biblioteca statale del Monumento nazionale della Abbazia Benedettina della Ss. Trinità, 31, f. 234r–235r	–	–
Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana, D.XXII.3, f. 2r	Epistola Auerois de intellectu	Hic finis est Epistole Aueroys de intellectu
Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. lat. 463, f. 85r–85v	–	–
Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2186, f. 70v–71r	Liber Aliquindi philosophi de intellectu et intellecto	–
Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 4426, f. 6r–v	Incipit liber Alkindi de intellectu	Explicit liber Alkindi de intellectu
Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, CA 2° 29, f. 210r–v	–	–
Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, CA 4° 15, f. 54v–55r and 55v	Libellus de intellectibus	–
Graz, Universitätsbibliothek, 482, f. 234r–v	–	–

(*cont.*)

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
København, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 164 2°, f. 117r–v	De intellectu	–
Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Fondo Geral 2299, f. 171r–v	–	–
ibid., f. 208r–v	–	–
Modena, Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Lat. 296 = alfa.M.8.21, f. 35v–36r	–	–
München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 8001, f. 114r–v	–	–
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 217, f. 178r–v	–	–
Oxford, Merton College Library, 278, f. 183v	–	–
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 6443, f. 195r	Liber Alquindi philosophi de intellectu et intellecto	–
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 16602, f. 111r–111v	Liber Alexandri de intellectu	–
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 16613, f. 100r–101r	De intellectu secundum Aristotelem et Platonem	Explicit liber de intellectu et intellecto secundum Alpharabium
Uppsala, Universitetsbibliotek, C 595, f. 24v–25r	–	–
Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. VI, 150 (= 2671), f. 64r	–	–
Worcester, Cathedral Library, Q. 81, f. 84v	Liber Alquindi philosophi de intellectu et intellecto	–

Gundisalvi's own works *De divisione philosophiae* and *Liber de anima* do not quote this translation, to the best of my knowledge, and I am not aware of quotations in other works by Gundisalvi either.

The second double translation is of Alfarabi's famous *Enumeration of the Sciences* (*Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm*), which was important for the intellectual development of the Latin West in several respects: because it offered a systematic and broad division of the sciences, many of which were not known in the Latin West; because it measured all sciences against the ideal of demonstrative reasoning;[6] and because it apparently prompted a good number of translators in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Spain to fill in the gaps in the Latin spectrum of sciences by producing new translations from Arabic.[7]

One of the two translations stems from Gerard of Cremona. This we know from the students' list, which contains the entry *Liber Alfarabii de scientiis* among Gerard's philosophical translations. Moreover, the translation with the incipit *Nostra in hoc libro intentio* is ascribed to Gerard of Cremona in two of the four manuscripts extant.

1.3 *Alfarabi,* Enumeration of the Sciences / De scientiis

Incipit: *Nostra in hoc libro intentio est scientias famosas …*
Explicit: *… sicut fit mulieribus et infantibus.*

at least four manuscripts

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Admont, Stiftsbibliothek, 578, f. 27r–33r	Incipit liber Alpharabii de divisione scienciarum	Completus est liber Alpharabii vel Albunazir de scienciis
Brugge, Hoofdbibliotheek Biekorf, 486, f. 94r–110v	Liber Alfarabii de scientiis translatus a magistro Gerardo Cremonensi de arabico in latinum	–

6 See Hasse 2020, ch. 2, with further literature.
7 Burnett 2001.

(*cont.*)

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Graz, Universitätsbibliothek, 482, f. 222v–229r	–	Completus est liber Alfrabii vel Abunazir de sentenciis
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 9335, f. 143va–151vb	Liber Alfarabii de scientiis translatus a magistro Girardo Cremonensi in Toleto de arabico in Latinum	–

The other translation, with the incipit *Cum plures essent*, is extant in at least nine manuscripts. As the below list of titles and colophons shows, the treatise is most commonly called *De divisione scientiarum* and is clearly identified as being written by Alfarabi. But none of the manuscripts mentions the name of the translator. This needs to be emphasized, as an antidote against the optimistic titles given to the treatise by modern editors: Manuel A. Alonso edited the text as *Domingo Gundisalvo: De scientiis, compilación a base principalmente de la Maqāla fī iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm de al-Fārābī*, and Jakob H.J. Schneider under *Al-Fārābī: De scientiis secundum versionem Dominici Gundisalvi*, where the phrase *secundum versionem* is Schneider's own Latin creation. This is not wrong, as we shall see, but it is not how medieval readers knew the text.

1.4 *Alfarabi,* On the Sciences / De divisione scientiarum

Incipit: *Cum plures essent* (*olim*) *philosophi* …
Explicit: … *alia in operationibus*.

at least nine manuscripts

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, McClean 169 (16), f. 240r–246r	–	libellus Alph. de diu. sci.
Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, CA 2° 32, f. 79r–88r	Liber Alphorabii de proprietatibus scientiarum valde bonus	–

(*cont.*)

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, CA 4° 295, f. 24r–35r	Incipit liber Alforabii de divisione scientiarum	–
Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Fondo Geral 2299, f. 165va–169vb	De divisione scientiarum	–
London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian B X 5, f. 24ra–27rb	Incipit Alpharabius de divisione omnium scientiarum	Explicit liber Alpharabii de divisione omnium scientiarum
Oxford, Merton College Library, 230, f. 29ra–32ra	–	–
Wien, Bibliothek des Dominikanerkonvents, 151 (olim 121), f. 132r–133v	Alpharabi de divisione scientiarum	Explicit Alpharabi de divisione scientiarum
Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 2473, f. 1a–29b	Alpharabius iurisconsultus de origine scientiarum	–
Worcester, Cathedral Library, Q. 81, f. 85r–87v	Liber Alfarabi de scientiis	–

The anonymous *Cum plures essent* version is the main source of Dominicus Gundisalvi's own treatise *De divisione philosophiae*, which also draws on other sources by Avicenna and al-Ġazālī.[8]

The third double translation is of the treatise *On Definitions and Descriptions* (*Kitāb al-Ḥudūd wa-r-rusūm*) by Isaac Israeli, the philosopher and physician who was active in Qayrawān in North Africa in the early tenth century and makes much use of writings by Alkindi. One can say with great certainty that one of the two translations comes from Gerard of Cremona. The translation with the incipit *Plures eorum qui* is attributed to Gerard in two of the at least 16 manuscripts. It seems that this translation traveled under two titles: a short title, which is *Liber de diffinitionibus*, and a long title, which involves the phrases

8 See Fidora, Werner 2007. For a convenient juxtaposition of Gerard's version, the *Cum plures essent* version and of Gundisalvi's own *De divisione philosophiae* on the metaphysical science, see Polloni 2016, p. 100–106.

Collections from the sayings of the philosophers and *About the difference between definition and description*. These phrases appear also in an Arabic-Hebrew translation and apparently belonged to the original Arabic title, which is lost.[9] The long title has close verbal parallels with the entry in the *socii*'s list of Gerard's translation: *Liber Ysac de descriptione rerum et diffinitionibus earum et de differentia inter descriptionem et diffinitionem*.[10] This again supports the ascription of the translation to Gerard.

1.5 *Isaac Israeli,* On Definitions / Liber de diffinitionibus

Incipit: *Plures eorum qui antiquorum libros inspexerunt …*
Explicit: *… testificatur illius contrarium*.

at least sixteen manuscripts

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Bernkastel-Kues, Bibliothek des Cusanusstifts, 205, f. 121r–v	Collectiones hee sunt ex dictis philosophorum …	Explicit liber deffinitionum Ysaac
Bologna, Biblioteca del Collegio di Spagna, 103, f. 111ra–ivvb	–	–
Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2186, f. 46v–50r	–	–
Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, 816, f. 1r–6v	–	–
Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Fondo Geral 2299, f. 301v–307r	–	–
Mainz, Wissenschaftliche Stadtbibliothek, I 519, f. 114v–118r	Collectis ex dictis philosophorum …	–
Olomouc, Státní okresní archiv, C O 536, f. 10r–13v	Incipiunt diffinitiones Ysaac … filii Salomonis.	–

9 Altmann, Stern 1958, p. 11, fn.
10 Burnett 2001, p. 280.

(*cont.*)

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
	Collectiones ex dictis philosophorum de differentia inter descriptiones et diffinitiones rerum et quare philosophia fuit descripta et non diffinita. De quorum aggregatione et ordinatione Ysaac medicus sollicitus fuit. Verba Ysaac	–
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 217, f. 111r–115v	Incipit liber Isaac de diffinitionibus translatus a magistro G. Cremon. in Toleto	–
Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 750, f. 99rb–101vb	Incipit liber de diffinitionibus Ysaac	–
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 6443, f. 187r–190r	Liber Ysaac de diffinitionibus translatus a magistro G. Cremonensi in Toleto	Finiuntur collectiones Ysaac Israelite medici in descriptionibus rerum et diffinitionibus earum et differentia inter descriptionem et diffinitionem
Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 14700, f. 153r–160v	Collectiones ex dictis philosophorum de differencia inter descripciones rerum et definiciones earum et quare philosophia fuit descripta et non definita; de quorum aggregacione et ordinacione Isaac medicus filius Salomonis sollicitus fuit. Verba Ysaac	Finiuntur collectiones Ysaac Israelite medici in descriptionibus rerum et diffinitionibus earum et differentia inter descriptionem et diffinitionem

(*cont.*)

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, 2236, f. 106r–116r	Incipit liber de diffinicionibus Ysach	–
Praha, Národní knihovna České republiky, 2364 (XIII.F.26), f. 59r–65v	–	–
Roma, Biblioteca Angelica, 242, f. 20v–24r	Incipit liber diffinitionum et descriptionum Ysaac summi philosophy	–
Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, C 659, f. 114v–118r	Collectum ex dictis philosophorum de differentia	–
Weimar, Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Fol. 61, f. 90v–94v	Collectiones ex dictis phylosophorum de differencia inter descriptiones rerum …	Explicit liber diffinitionum

The second Isaac translation with the incipit *Quamplures in libris* is transmitted in at least six manuscripts, and hence less often than Gerard's version. Its title is *De diffinitionibus*. The manuscripts do not mention any translator.

1.6 *Isaac Israeli,* On Definitions / De diffinitionibus

Incipit: *Quamplures* (*invenientes*) *in libris philosophorum …*
Explicit: *… resolutionem ex motu.*

at least six manuscripts

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Cambridge, St. John's College Library, 120 IV, f. 178r–182r	–	–
Edinburgh, University Library, 134, f. 34v–36v	Incipit liber Isaac de diffinitionibus	–

(*cont.*)

Manuscript	Title	Colophon
Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, CA 2° 32, f. 88v–92v	–	–
München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 8001, f. 151v–154v	Incipit Ysaac de diffinicionibus	Explicit Ysaac
Oxford, Corpus Christi College Library, 86, f. 219v–224r	Incipit liber Ysaac de diffinitionbus	Explicit Ysaac de diffinitionibus et descriptionibus
Wien, Bibliothek des Dominikanerkonvents, 151 (121), f. 133v–135r	Ysaac de diffinitionibus	–

Dominicus Gundisalvi silently quotes from this version of Isaac's *On Definitions* in his *Liber de anima* and his *De divisione philosophiae*.[11] This is very indicative, but it does not yet prove that Gundisalvi was the translator of the version. It only shows that the translation predates the composition of the two treatises by Gundisalvi.

As to Gundisalvi as the translator of the three anonymous versions, we are on firmer ground with the stylistic evidence for translator attribution that I have presented in the article "Notes on Anonymous Twelfth-Century Translations", published together with Andreas Büttner, which focuses on philosophical translations from Arabic into Latin on the Iberian Peninsula. The analysis of small words and phrases specific to known translators leads to the result that it is probable that the anonymous version of all three texts, i.e. Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, Alfarabi's *Enumeration* and Isaac's *On Definitions*, was produced by Dominicus Gundisalvi.[12] This result will be corroborated by the present paper, in particular by the last table below which lists Gundisalvian vocabulary that distinguishes Gundisalvi from Gerard.

11 Muckle 1940, p. 98 (*De anima*) and Fidora, Werner 2007, p. 56–60 (*De divisione philosophiae*).

12 Hasse, Büttner 2018, p. 338–341.

2 Which Version Was First?

Gerard of Cremona and Dominicus Gundisalvi were contemporaries, and both were canons of the cathedral of Toledo: Gerard is mentioned in three charters of the cathedral in 1157, 1174 and 1176. He dies in 1187. Gundsalvi appears in charters between 1162 and 1190. The dates of their lives, therefore, do not settle the question of who was translating first.

The issue of the priority of the two versions has often been discussed, especially with respect to Alfarabi's *On the Sciences*.[13] Gerard's version of this text is a literal translation; Gundisalvi's translation is shorter, less than half the length of Gerard's translation, and leaves out, among other things, topics touching on the religion of Islam and on Arabic grammar. Manuel Alonso,[14] Richard Lemay,[15] Jacob H.J. Schneider,[16] Alain Galonnier[17] and others have suggested that Gundisalvi's shorter version was the earlier one. They argue that Gundisalvi's translation is a Latin digest or compendium of the Arabic original, and that Gerard later decided he wanted to have a literal and complete version.

In contrast, Michael C. Weber,[18] Franz Schupp[19] and others have argued that Gerard was first and that Gundisalvi later revised Gerard's text, leaving out passages he did not find relevant. One reason advanced for Gundisalvi being the reviser is that his vocabulary is believed to be more up-to-date, more current in the philosophy of the twelfth century: Gundisalvi writes *essentia* instead of *existentia*, *practica* instead of *activa*, *theorica* instead of *speculativa*.[20] But Richard Lemay argues that Gerard of Cremona consciously avoids certain vocabulary and that he did this when correcting Gundisalvi's early and incomplete translation.[21] As one can see, the issue is not settled by these arguments. Both stories are possible: that Gerard found Gundisalvi's shorter translation deficient and decided to complete it. Or that Gundisalvi took Gerard's

13 See the summary of the discussion in Schupp 2005, p. LXIII–LXIV.

14 Alonso 1954, p. 13–32. Cf. also Farmer 1960, p. 19–20, who believes that Gerard of Cremona revised the translation by Gundisalvi (which he believes to be by "John of Seville") because he was concerned about the omissions and wanted to be more faithful to the Arabic.

15 Lemay 1978, p. 175 and 181–182.

16 Schneider 2006, p. 116–117.

17 Galonnier 2016, p. 78–79.

18 Weber 2002, p. 131–132. Another scholar who advocates the priority of Gerard's version, is Jolivet 1988, p. 135–136. Burnett 2001, p. 269, leaves the matter open.

19 Schupp 2005, p. LXIV.

20 Schupp 2005, p. LXIV.

21 See n. 15 above.

literal translation and transformed it into something more understandable for the Latin reader.

My idea of a philological solution to the question is best explained by turning to an example, a passage from Alkindi's *On the Intellect*. The following table offers a synopsis of the two Latin versions by Gerard and Gundisalvi, as edited by Nagy:[22]

Alkindi, *On the Intellect*

	Gerard of Cremona	**Anonymous (Gundisalvi)**
1	ratio	
2	igitur	
3		intellectus
4	et	
5	rationatum	intellectum
6	sunt	
7	res una *ex parte* animae. Ratio	unum *secundum quod sunt in* anima. Intellectus
8	uero	
9	quae	qui
10	est	
11		in
12	actu semper	
13	faciens extrahere	et qui extrahit
14	animam ad hoc ut fiat	
15	rationalis actu	in effectu intelligens
16	postquam fuerat	
17	rationalis	intelligens in
18	potentia,	
19		ipse et intellectum ipsum
20	non	
21	est ipsa et rationatum	sunt
22	res	
23	una. Rationatum	una. Intellectum
24	igitur in anima et	

22 The table was created with a computer programme written by my Würzburg colleague Andreas Büttner.

Alkindi, *On the Intellect* (*cont.*)

	Gerard of Cremona	Anonymous (Gundisalvi)
25	ratio prima	intellectus primus
26	*ex parte*	
27	rationis	intelligentiae
28	primae non	
29	est	sunt
30	res una	

The column on the left contains Gerard's version, the column on the right Gundisalvi's. In some parts, both versions have the same text, which is when the line of the table is not divided into two columns. Line 14, for instance, only contains the words *animam ad hoc ut fiat*, which appear in both versions. In the following line 15, the two versions differ: Gerard writes *rationalis actu* where Gundisalvi has *in effectu intelligens*. Line 16 is again identical in both versions: *postquam fuerat*. It is very clear from this table that the two versions share a good amount of text and that one version is a revision of the other. But which was first?

The problem can be solved, I suggest, by concentrating on the text shared by both translators: that is, the lines without a break in the middle, the text which is common ground, which is unrevised and hence clearly part of the earlier translation. Does it contain the vocabulary of Gerard or of Gundisalvi? This is the crucial question.

The table above with a passage of Alkindi's *On the Intellect* gives first hints towards an answer. In line 7 of the table, Gerard of Cremona writes *ex parte*, where Gundisalvi has *secundum quod sunt in*, translating the Arabic *min ǧiha*, 'with respect to', or 'from the perspective of'.[23] The two different renderings appear again in another passage of the text (not quoted here). But in line 26, the text is unchanged: *ex parte* appears in both versions. This is an indication that *ex parte* is Gerard's vocabulary and that it comes from the original translation.

This, of course, is only a single passage. It is advisable to base stylistic arguments on a systematic approach to make them convincing. In the following, this is attempted in three methodical steps: first, by focusing on words and phrases highly characteristic of Gerard of Cremona or Dominicus Gundisalvi if

23 Abū Rīda 1950–1953, p. 356 and 357. The other passage is on p. 355; here *ex parte* and *secundum quod sunt in* translate *ammā … fa* ('as to').

compared against other Arabic-Latin translators of the twelfth century on the Iberian Peninsula; second, by focusing on the vocabulary that distinguishes the translations of Gerard of Cremona from those of Dominicus Gundisalvi; and third, by focusing on words and phrases that the common ground shares with one of the two versions. In other words, the three approaches search for stylistic evidence in the common ground by comparing its vocabulary to three sets of texts of decreasing size: comparing, first, against the translations of other persons; second, against other translations by Gerard and Gundisalvi; and third, against the individual versions of the three double translations.

(1) Let us start with the words singled out as highly characteristic of Gerard or Gundisalvi. In the above-mentioned paper "Notes on Anonymous Twelfth-Century Translations", about 50 words and phrases were isolated for Gerard and Gundisalvi respectively as being exclusively characteristic for them if analyzed as part of a set of 29 philosophical translations and 23 astronomical and astrological translations of the twelfth century. Do any of these highly characteristic words reappear in the common ground of the three double translations? The answer is presented in the following table:[24]

Gerard's and Gundisalvi's translations compared against other translators

	Gerard of Cremona: stylistic words in the common ground	**Dominicus Gundisalvi: stylistic words in the common ground**
Alkindi, *On the Intellect*	sunt res una (1)	–
Alfarabi, *On the Sciences*	–	–
Isaac Israeli, *On Definitions*	reliquarum (1), absque medio (1), eius et ipsius (1)	–

While there are no words specific to Gundisalvi in the common ground, we encounter one phrase specific to Gerard in Alkindi and three such Gerardian phrases in Isaac Israeli. One phrase in Alkindi, of course, is not very strong evidence, even in a short text, but the three highly characteristic phrases in Isaac are significant. This is a first robust indication that the common ground of the

24 The word count is based on the following editions of the Latin versions: Nagy 1897, p. 1–11, for *On the Intellect*; Schupp 2005 and Schneider 2006 for *On the Sciences*; Muckle 1937–1938 for *On Definitions*.

two Isaac Israeli translations is the work of Gerard and not of Gundisalvi. Also, it makes us wonder whether Gundisalvi was involved in the production of the common ground at all.

(2) In a next step, we do not consider the other translators of the century any more, but concentrate on terms and phrases that distinguish between the translations of Gerard and Gundisalvi only. The corpus on which this search is based contains eight translations by Gerard and seven by Gundisalvi, all in the field of philosophy.[25] I have split up each of the double translations into three files, in the manner of the table above with the *ex parte*-passage from Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, which was divided into three columns. One file contains the common ground, one file the text isolated for Gerard, one file the text isolated for Gundisalvi. As the table below shows, Gundisalvi's isolated texts are shorter than Gerard's—with the exception of Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, where they have about the same length—but they are still long enough to be useful for stylistic analysis.

	Gerard's translation	**Gerard's isolated text**	**Common ground**	**Anonymous's (Gundisalvi's) isolated text**	**Anonymous Translation (Gundisalvi)**
Alkindi, *On the Intellect*	733 words	358	375	430	805
Alfarabi, *On the Sciences*	15106	11994	3112	3788	6900
Isaac Israeli, *On Definitions*	7124	4624	2500	1952	4452

I have then started to search, with a search software written by Andreas Büttner, for all those terms in Alkindi's *On the Intellect* which are both in Gerard's isol-

25 The corpus consists of the following translations: Gerard of Cremona's translations of Aristotle, *Analytica posteriora*; Aristotle, *De caelo*; Aristotle / Ibn al-Biṭrīq, *Meteora* I–III; Ps.-Aristotle, *Liber de causis*; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De tempore, De sensu, De eo quod augmentum*; Themistius, *Comm. on Analytica posteriora*; Alkindi, *De quinque essentiis*; and Alkindi, *De somno et visione*; as well as Dominicus Gundisalvi's translations (partly produced together with collaborators) of Avicenna, *De anima*; Avicenna, *De medicinis cordialibus*; Ibn Gabirol, *Fons vitae*; Algazel, *Summa theoricae philosophiae*; Avicenna, *Philosophia prima*; Avicenna, *De convenientia et differentia scientiarum*; Ps.-Avicenna, *Liber celi et mundi*.

ated text and in the common ground, but not in Gundisalvi's isolated text and not in any of Gundisalvi's seven translations either. This I did for Alfarabi and Isaac Israeli too, and then repeated the procedure for Gundisalvi: I searched for vocabulary of Gundisalvi's isolated text which is in the common ground, but not in Gerard's isolated text nor in any of Gerard's translations in the corpus either. The aim of this approach is to see whether any vocabulary of the original translation, which is untypical of the other translator, survived in the common ground. The result is presented in the table below.[26]

It proves a sensible procedure to extinguish all those terms that are used in the other philosophical translations by Gerard and Gundisalvi. The phrase *ex parte*, for instance, which we met above, does not appear in the table below, even though it seemed clear that Gundisalvi twice changed Gerard's phrase *ex parte* into *secundum quod sunt in* and once left *ex parte* untouched. In fact, however, *ex parte* belongs to Gundisalvi's regular vocabulary in other translations, and the (low) possibility remains that Gundisalvi wrote both *secundum quod sunt* and *ex parte* in the common ground. This is why in this second approach the focus is on vocabulary that reappears in the common ground, but not in the other translations of the rival translator.

Note that the vocabulary in this table—other than in the first approach above—is not purely stylistic, but contains many content words that are specific to single disciplines, such as *pondera* ("weights") or *civitates* ("states").

Gerard's translations compared against Gundisalvi's translations

	Gerard of Cremona: vocabulary from Gerard's isolated text untypical of Gundisalvi in the common ground	**Dominicus Gundisalvi: vocabulary from Gundisalvi's isolated text untypical of Gerard in the common ground**
Alkindi, *On the Intellect*	sermonis (2 occ. in Gerard's isolated text/1 occ. in the common ground)	effectum (3/1), exit (2/2)
Alfarabi, *On the Sciences*	sermones (24/1), declarat (11/3), civitatibus (10/3), pondera (6/1), erret (6/1), gentis (5/1), conditiones (5/1), ponderum (3/1), uteretur (3/1), inimicus (3/1), propalavit	de dictionibus (5/2), est proprium (4/1)

26 The table lists terms or phrases that appear at least twice in the isolated texts. Not included are two-word phrases with *et*, which are legion and of doubtful stylistic value.

Gerard's translations compared against Gundisalvi's translations (*cont.*)

	Gerard of Cremona: vocabulary from Gerard's isolated text untypical of Gundisalvi in the common ground	**Dominicus Gundisalvi: vocabulary from Gundisalvi's isolated text untypical of Gerard in the common ground**
	(3/1), topicis (2/1), syllogistici (2/1), penetrabiliores (2/1), rationalibus (2/1), administrentur (2/1), quorum proprietas (9/1), quibus rebus (8/2), in civitatibus (7/3), in summa (4/3), dictionum significantium (2/1), deinde inquirit (3/1), non erret (3/1), sciat quibus (3/1), in sermonibus (3/1), sit modus (3/1), deinde comprehendit (2/1), sicut proportio (2/1), quorum proprietas est (7/1), proprietas est ut (7/1), in civitatibus et (4/3), consuetudines et habitus (4/1), ad illud quod (3/2), et sermones quidem (3/1), et quibus rebus (3/1), deinde inquirit de (2/1), et illa quidem (2/1), in utrisque rebus (2/1), ut non erret (2/1), sit modus in (2/1), est ut administrentur (2/1), ensis ad ensem (2/1), suam efficit operationem (2/1), operationes et consuetudines (2/1), quorum proprietas est ut (5/1), in civitatibus et gentibus (2/3)	
Isaac Israeli, *On Definitions*	reliquarum (3/1), firmat (3/2), vivo (2/1), falso (2/1), intellectualiter (2/1), post quietem (7/1), exitum eius (3/1), scientiam totius (2/1), definierunt eam (2/1)	effectum (3/2)

In the common ground of the two translations of Alfarabi's *De scientiis*, there is overwhelming evidence for terms and phrases of Gerard of Cremona that are untypical of Gundisalvi. This is very clear evidence that Gerard was the first to translate *De scientiis* into Latin and that Gundisalvi revised the translation by thoroughly rewriting some passages, while leaving other passages untouched.

In the case of Isaac Israeli's *On Definitions*, there is also a good number of Gerardian phrases in the common ground, but only one Gundisalvian phrase. This makes it likely that Gerard's translation was first, and that this is indeed the case will be shown in the third step below. The vocabulary of Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, on the other hand, does not yet offer us any clues.

(3) In a third step, the textual basis for stylistic analysis is narrowed down again. The search is now for phrases in the common ground that appear also in the isolated versions of Gerard or Gundisalvi, regardless whether they are employed elsewhere by the two translators. The idea is to single out all those phrases that appear in the common ground, but only in one of the two isolated versions, that is, either in Gerard's or Gundisalvi's version. For this purpose, single words are ignored because their number is too massive. Two-word phrases with *et* are not recorded either. Moreover, only those phrases are considered which appear at least two times in an isolated version for Alkindi and Isaac Israeli. In the case of Alfarabi's *De scientiis*, there is so much material already for phrases appearing at least three times that I do not record phrases that appear two times. The result is the following:

Gerard's three versions compared against Gundisalvi's three versions

	Gerard of Cremona: stylistic evidence from Gerard's isolated text in the common ground	**Dominicus Gundisalvi: stylistic evidence from Gundisalvi's isolated text in the common ground**
Alkindi, *On the Intellect*	ex parte (2 occ. in Gerard's isolated text/2 occ. in the common ground)	est in (4/5), in anima (3/13), quod est (2/4)
Alfarabi, *On the Sciences*	ex eis (24/8), sunt in (19/7), in quibus (15/3), est possibile (15/1), est sicut (12/2), ab eis (10/3), in lineis (10/1), proprietas est (10/2), de eis (9/1), est illa (9/1), in omnibus (9/1), quorum proprietas (9/1), est verum (8/1), quibus rebus (8/2), in omni (7/1), ad illud (7/3), quod sunt (7/7), in civitatibus (7/3), in unaquaque (6/3), in ea (6/3), ut non (6/1), ut sint (6/2), eis cum (6/1), hoc nomine (6/1), ergo sunt (5/1), in illa (5/1), secundum modum (5/1), per	est proprium (4/1), de dictionibus (3/2), libro qui (3/1), ut in (3/1), in naturalibus (3/1)

Gerard's three versions compared against Gundisalvi's three versions (*cont.*)

	Gerard of Cremona: stylistic evidence from Gerard's isolated text in the common ground	**Dominicus Gundisalvi: stylistic evidence from Gundisalvi's isolated text in the common ground**
	eas (5/3), secundum viam (5/1), ei quod (5/1), in summa (4/3), cum quibus (4/1), in esse (4/1), in unoquoque (4/1), quo est (4/1), in utrisque (4/1), in scientiis (4/1), cum eis (4/1), una est (4/2), in qua (4/2), est eius (4/2), corporum naturalium (4/1), dictionum significantium (3/1), dictionum simplicium (3/1), deinde inquirit (3/2), in fine (3/1), an sint (3/6), eis quod (3/1), dat regulas (3/5), secunda est (3/2), eam apud (3/1), ex quo (3/2), in sententiis (3/1), non erit (3/2), non erret (3/1), in anima (3/6), sermones quidem (3/1), a quo (3/2), sciat quibus (3/1), in sermonibus (3/1), de omnibus (3/2), accidunt eis (3/4), sit modus (3/1), eorum in (3/1), eis per (3/1), quod est in (11/5), illud quod est (5/3), in civitatibus et (4/3), consuetudines et habitus (4/1), in quo est (3/1), ad illud quod (3/2), estverum et (3/1), et sermones quidem (3/1), et quibus rebus (3/1), ad invicem et (3/1), quorum proprietas est ut (5/1), quod non est verum (4/1)	
Isaac Israeli, *On Definitions*	est quod (10/3), est ut (7/1), illud quod (7/1), post quietem (7/1), quae sunt (6/3), est sermo (6/1), ab eis (5/1), manifestum est (5/1), est hoc (4/1), nisi cum (4/1), quod in (4/1), enim quod (4/1), cum non (3/2), secunda est (3/1), ita sit (3/1), tunc iam (3/2), sermo in (3/1), cum enim (3/1), exitum eius (3/1), est in (3/6), non sit (3/1),	duobus modis (8/1), sed non (2/1)

Gerard's three versions compared against Gundisalvi's three versions (*cont.*)

	Gerard of Cremona: stylistic evidence from Gerard's isolated text in the common ground	**Dominicus Gundisalvi: stylistic evidence from Gundisalvi's isolated text in the common ground**
	in qua (3/1), veritas est (3/1), in ipso (3/2), in omni (2/1), in homine (2/1), ex proprietate (2/3), tertia est (2/1), exsistens in (2/2), est sicut (2/3), scientiam totius (2/1), ex eis (2/2), essentiam suam (2/1), eorum est (2/1), factus est (2/1), in ea (2/2), in causato (2/1), ad aliud (2/3), et propter hoc (6/9), manifestum est quod (2/1), cum non sit (2/1)	

While the evidence for Alkindi's *On the Intellect* remains inconclusive, the comparison of the isolated versions against each other leaves no doubt about the priority of Gerard's translations of Alfarabi's *On the Sciences* and Isaac's *On Definitions*. The common ground of Alfarabi and Isaac is full with vocabulary from Gerard's isolated version, but it hardly ever resonates with the vocabulary of Gundisalvi's isolated version. Apparently, Gundisalvi left much material in these two translations intact when revising Gerard's version.

In order to know more about Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, we have to return to the close reading of the text which we started above when analyzing the usage of *ex parte* and *secundum quod sunt*. Another noteworthy difference between the two versions is Gerard's and Gundisalvi's rendering of the Arabic *waqa'a taḥta*, 'falling under', i.e., the senses or the intellect. Gerard translates with *cadere sub*, Gundisalvi with *subiacere*:

	Gerard of Cremona	**Anonymous (Gundisalvi)**
1		dixit enim
2		Aristoteles
3	quod forma est duae formae quarum una est habens materiam et	
4		illa

(*cont.*)

	Gerard of Cremona	Anonymous (Gundisalvi)
5		est
6		illa|
7		quae
8	**cadit sub** sensu sed|	**subiacet** sensui et
9		altera est illa quae non habet materiam et
10		|illa
11		est
12		illa|
13		quae
14	**cadit sub** ratione|	**subiacet** intellectui
16		et
17		|illa
18		est specialitas rerum et
19		|id
20		quod est supra eam
21		|scilicet generalitas rerum
22		et forma quidem quae est in materia
23		est|
24		actu
25		|est
26	sensata quoniam si non esset actu sensata non **caderet sub** sensu cumque	
27	adquirit|	apprehendit
28		eam anima tunc ipsa est in anima

This passage again speaks in favour of Gerard being the first translator and Gundisalvi being the reviser. For Gerard's phrase *cadere sub* is once retained in the common ground (line 26). The most natural explanation is that Gundisalvi twice changed the text into *subiacet*, but once left it untouched. Particularly telling is the three-word phrase *cadere sub sensu* for Arabic *waqaʿa taḥta al-ḥiss*, 'falling under the senses', which Gerard also uses in line 8 (*cadit sub sensu*). This phrase is highly distinctive of Gerard of Cremona in all Arabic-Latin translation literature, as far as I can see by searching through the *Arabic and Latin Glossary*[27] and the *Arabic and Latin Corpus* on the University of Würzburg website.

27 Hasse et al. 2009–.

At present, I only know the phrase from Gerard's translations of the *Liber de causis* (where it appears twice), of Aristotle's *De caelo* (1) and of Alkindi's *De quinque essentiis* (1). It is highly probable, therefore, that Gerard is the author of the common ground and thus of the first translation of Alkindi's *On the Intellect*.

Another example of Gerardian language left untouched in the common ground is the phrase *inventus/-a/-um est*, which translates the Arabic *mawǧūd*, 'existing'. The translation of this Arabic term with forms of *inveniri* is motivated by the literal meaning of the root *waǧada*, which means 'to find', 'to encounter'. This translation of *mawǧūd* is non uncommon in the Middle Ages, as is recorded in the *Arabic and Latin Glossary*: it is used, for example, by John of Seville, Alfred of Shareshill and the Burgos translators of Avicenna. In the present translation of Alkindi's *On the Intellect*, Gundisalvi translates *mawǧūd* with forms of *esse* in four passages where Gerard employs *inventus est*. But in two passages *inventus est* is left unchanged. It is true that *inventus est* is not an exclusively Gerardian term, and, hence, the evidence is not as convincing as with *cadere sub sensu*. But it adds additional weight to the priority of Gerard's version.

A final example concerns the Arabic phrase *matā šā'a*, 'whenever it wants', which appears four times in our text. The first three occurrences are translated by Gerard as *quando vult, cum vult* and *quando vult*, where Gundisalvi writes *quando voluerit*, *cum voluerit* and *cum voluerit*. The fourth occurrence, however, is left unchanged by the reviser and appears as *quando vult* in the common ground. Again, this is Gerard's phrase, not Gundisalvi's.

In view of all this evidence for the common ground, which includes the highly characteristic phrase *sunt res una* mentioned above and the Gerardian vocabulary *ex parte*, *cadere sub*, *inventus est* and *quando vult*, it is safe to conclude that Alkindi's *On the Intellect* was translated first by Gerard and later revised by Gundisalvi. The case of Alfarabi's *On the Sciences* and Isaac's *On Definitions* is even more definite: given the enormous amount of Gerardian vocabulary in the common ground and the dearth of Gundisalvian vocabulary, even if we consider the isolated Gundisalvi versions, one can conclude with great certainty that Gerard's renderings of Alfarabi's and Isaac's text were first.

3 Was the *Liber de causis* Revised by Dominicus Gundisalvi?

After all this, we are in a better position to answer the question of whether Gerard's translation of the *Liber de causis* was revised by Gundisalvi. We have learnt from the three examples of double translation that Gundisalvi is a thor-

ough reviser of Gerard's translations—to an extent that we can still recognize his style in the revision. Is this the case too with the *Liber de causis*, in the form edited by Adriaan Pattin?

As to the style of Gerard of Cremona himself, there are many phrases distinctive of him in the *Liber de causis* translation. If the translation had been anonymous, we would have had no problem assigning it to Gerard of Cremona. Among those stylistic phrases of two words or more which serve to distinguish Gerard's translations from Gundisalvi's and which appear in at least 80 % of his philosophical translations and at least 10 times, the following are in the *Liber de causis*: *et ipsius* (3), *inter utraque* (1), *per hunc* (1), *quoniam quando* (1), *similiter quando* (1), *et propter illud* (3), *et nos quidem* (3), *et causa in* (1), *eius et ipsius* (1), *et illud quidem* (1). These terms contribute to the very "Gerardian sound" of the translation.

As to Gundisalvi, the probability that he revised the *Liber de causis* can be estimated best if we compare the traces of his vocabulary in the *Liber de causis* translation with the traces in the three double translations discussed above. For this purpose, I have searched for Gundisalvian phrases of two words and more which differentiate Gundisalvi's translations from Gerard (not from the other twelfth-century translators) and which appear in at least 80 % of his philosophical translations and at least 10 times:

Gundisalvi's vocabulary differentiated from Gerard's vocabulary

	Dominicus Gundisalvi stylistic phrases found regularly and often in Gundisalvi's translations, but not in Gerard's[28]
Alkindi, *De intellectu et intellecto* (length: 805 words)	quantum ad (1), et id (1), non erat (1), est in potentia (2), et id quod (1), quod est in potentia (1)
Alfarabi, *De divisione scientiarum* (length: 6900 words)	et ideo (1), et deinde (1), ob hoc (2), nec in (3), alio modo (1), vel ex (1), et ob (2), ad illam (1), eorum non (1), hoc totum (2), id de (1), autem fuerint (1), omnibus illis (1), modo in (2), et multa (3), et ob hoc (2), si autem fuerint (1), ut per hoc (1), et hoc totum (2), et haec sunt (1)

28 The Gundisalvian terms are listed in decreasing frequency of occurrence in his oeuvre for two-word, three-word and four-word phrases respectively.

Gundisalvi's vocabulary differentiated from Gerard's vocabulary (*cont.*)

	Dominicus Gundisalvi stylistic phrases found regularly and often in Gundisalvi's translations, but not in Gerard's
Isaac Israeli, *De diffinitionibus* (length: 4452 words)	sine dubio (1), et ideo (4), quicquid est (2), et deinde (4), et quicquid (2), ob hoc (7), postquam autem (1), ad modum (1), ideo non (1), unde non (1), et ob (6), est vel (3), nihil aliud (1), alicuius rei (1), dicitur esse (1), quod agit (1), in tantum (1), cum suis (1), eius natura (1), ad id quod (2), et ob hoc (6), et ideo non (1), quicquid est in (1), ut per hoc (1), in tantum quod (1), ad id quod est (1)
Ps.-Aristotle, *Liber de causis* (length: 7194 words)	esse cum (1), unde non (1), eorum non (2), quod agit (1), cum suis (1)

We can see here that Gundisalvi's style remains recognizable in his revisions. In the translations of Alfarabi and Isaac Israeli, one can find very distinctive three-words phrases such as *et ob hoc* or *in tantum quod*. And even the very short text *On the Intellect* by Alkindi contains some phrases that clearly distinguish the revision from Gerard's version. The *Liber de causis*, in contrast, is longer than even Alfarabi's *On the Sciences* (in Gundisalvi's version), but contains only some stray traces of Gundisalvian vocabulary. If Gundisalvi had revised the text in a way similar to the other three revisions, he would have left many more stylistic traces in such a long text. It is therefore very unlikely that Gundisalvi revised the *Liber de causis*.

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Taylor, R.C. (1988), 'Remarks on the Latin Text and the Translator of the *Kalām fī maḥd al-khair / Liber de causis*', in *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 30, p. 75–102.

Van Riet, S. (1968–1972)—see Avicenna latinus.

Weber, M.C. (2002), 'Gerard of Cremona: The Danger of Being Half-Acculturated', *Medieval Encounters* 8, p. 123–134.

CHAPTER 13

Doubles traductions et omissions : une approche critique en vue d'une édition de la traduction latine du *Liber de causis*

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Il y a presque trente ans, Richard Taylor publiait une liste de soixante-quinze cas dont la grande majorité concernait la nécessité de revoir de façon majeure (ou, dans des cas plus rares, mineure) l'édition de la traduction latine du *Livre du Bien pur* par A. Pattin[1], quelques cas ayant trait directement au rapport entre la traduction latine et le texte arabe[2]. Ces remarques étaient largement dérivées de sa thèse de doctorat[3], qui signalait, pourtant, un plus grand nombre de cas impliquant une divergence entre la traduction latine et le texte arabe tel qu'il l'avait édité[4]. Plus que quiconque, Taylor était conscient des nombreux problèmes auxquels tout éventuel nouvel éditeur ou réviseur de la traduction latine est inévitablement confronté : le nombre extrêmement limité des manuscrits arabes (un seul connu à l'époque de l'édition Pattin, trois à l'époque de l'édition Taylor), et à l'inverse un nombre très élevé de manuscrits latins[5]. Ensuite, il y a la nature particulière du texte lui-même, qui constitue dans son ensemble une paraphrase d'une série de propositions des *Éléments de théologie* de Proclus, non sans certains remodelages doctrinaux et mise à contribution d'autres sources, en particulier la *Pseudo-Théologie*[6]. Un rapprochement avec le texte des *Éléments de théologie* peut donc être utile pour

1 Pattin 1966, p. 134-203.

2 Taylor 1989, p. 84-100. Taylor (1989, p. 84) reconnaît que son projet est similaire à celui de Vansteenkiste 1967, mais remarque à juste titre que ce dernier prenait comme référence pour l'arabe l'édition Bardenhewer (basée sur le seul manuscrit Leyde Or. 209) et ignorait donc les manuscrits Ankara, İsmail Saib 1 1696 et Istanbul, Sülemanyie Kütüphanesi, Hacı Mahmud 5683. Notons toutefois que le manuscrit d'Istanbul est une copie directe de celui d'Ankara, voir Taylor 1982, p. 259-262 (nous remercions M. Taylor d'avoir attiré notre attention sur son article où il offre sinon la preuve, du moins des indications très fortes en faveur d'une telle dépendance).

3 Taylor 1981, p. 431-519.

4 Taylor 1981, p. 130-279.

5 Pour une liste provisoire, énumérant 237 manuscrits, voir Taylor 1983, p. 68-80.

6 D'Ancona 1995, p. 121-153 ; voir aussi Taylor 2016, p. 228-230.

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une compréhension correcte du texte, et apporter ainsi une contribution à l'évaluation adéquate de certaines différences entre le texte arabe et la traduction latine, bien que limitée aux cas où le rapprochement avec le texte grec de Proclus est incontestable.

L'existence d'une autre version arabe du *Livre du Bien pur*, que Thillet et Oudaimah ont appelé *Liber de causis II*, présente également un intérêt manifeste[7]. Il faudrait aussi tenir compte de la réception dans la tradition arabe, fût-ce de façon partielle, du *Liber de causis I* dont témoignent : le vingtième chapitre du *Livre de la Métaphysique* de ʿAbd al-Lāṭif al-Baġdādī[8] ; la seconde partie de la *Réfutation de celui qui parle de la disparition et l'annihilation de l'âme après la mort*, le plus souvent attribué à Platon, mais parfois à al-Fārābī[9] ; plusieurs paragraphes des *Chapitres sur des marques distinctives divines* (*Fuṣūl*) d'al-ʾĀmirī[10] ; quelques fragments dans les *Questions siciliennes* d'Ibn Sabʿīn[11] ; et enfin des larges extraits du *Ce qui est nécessaire pour celui qui connaît* (*Budd*) de ce même auteur[12]. La traduction latine est parfois conforme à une leçon

7 *Liber de causis II*.

8 Badawi 1955, p. 248-256 ; Taylor 1981, p. 520-529. Une présentation brève de ce chapitre se trouve chez Martini-Bonadeo 2013, p. 242-254, où il est indiqué (p. 243) qu'al-Baġdādī reproduit, dans l'ordre, (des extraits de) tous les chapitres du *Livre du Bien pur*, à l'exception des chapitres 4, 10, 18 et 20. Taylor (Taylor 1981, p. 120) tient compte du texte tel qu'al-Baġdādī le présente – non de façon systématique, mais de temps à autre.

9 Türker 1965, p. 58, § 2-59, § 3 ; Badawi 1974, p. 338-339 ; Taylor 1982, p. 530-544. Ce petit traité contient une citation (relativement littérale) du 'chapitre' 23 et de la première partie du chapitre 5 (et a été mis à contribution par Taylor pour l'édition de ces 'chapitres', voir Taylor 1982, p. 120).

10 Wakelnig 2006 ; Taylor 1981, p. 545-548. Notons que Wakelnig indique quelques parallèles en plus de ceux déjà signalés par Taylor (Taylor 1981, p. 546) et que les *Fuṣūl* citent toujours de façon très fragmentaire et non littérale les 'chapitres' du *Livre du Bien pur* (rapprochements avec tous les 'chapitres', à l'exception des chapitres 5, 10, 13-17, 20, 27, 28 et 31).

11 Akasoy 2006, p. 340-410 (arabe), 411-563 (traduction allemande) ; Spallino 2002, p. 314-223 (reproduction de l'édition arabe de Yaltkaya 1941), 53-222 (traduction italienne) ; Taylor 1981, p. 549-553, où une liste des citations du *Livre du Bien pur* est donnée (liste ignorée autant par Akasoy que par Spallino).

12 Ibn Sabʿīn 1978, *passim* ; Lator 1944, p. 415-417 établit une liste des passages où le *Budd* cite un 'chapitre' (en entier ou partiellement), faisant référence au manuscrit Carullah 1273 d'Istanbul pour le *Budd* et à l'édition Bardenhewer 1882 pour le *Livre du Bien pur*, mais nous avons trouvé quelques passages additionnels (indiqués en gras dans la liste qui suit). Voici une nouvelle liste (toujours provisoire) des fragments communs, faisant référence aux éditions Taylor 1981 [T] (et Badawi 1955 [B]) pour le *Kitāb ʿal-īdāḥ fī ḫayr al-maḥḍ*, *Livre du Bien pur* et à l'édition Katturah [K] pour le *Budd* : 1 : T p. 138,11-13 (B p. 3,10-12) // K p. 77,23-24 ; 2 : T p. 144-146 (B p. 4-5) // K p. 50,3-16 (incluant quelques additions et changements mineurs dans la formulation) ; 3 : T p. 147,1-148,11 (B p. 5,10-14) // K p. 132,9-14 ; 4 : T p. 151,1-152,8, **156,33-159,48 et 159,49-52** (B p. 6,8-11, **7,10-8,6 et 8,7-9**) // K p. 49,15-21, **202,3-13**

non attestée dans les trois manuscrits utilisés par Taylor pour son édition, mais pourtant présente dans un (ou plusieurs) de ces ouvrages que nous venons de mentionner, comme nous le montrerons dans la suite. Quant à la réception de la traduction latine elle-même, elle fut considérable et selon l'état actuel des recherches, on dénombre une soixantaine de commentaires entre le douzième et le seizième siècle[13]. Ils ont clairement une importance capitale pour l'étude de la transmission de la traduction latine, car ils ne sont pas dépourvus de valeur pour fixer la leçon originale la plus vraisemblable. Enfin, une édition critique de la traduction latine ne peut pas ignorer l'existence des trois traductions latino-hébraïques[14].

Mais avant d'offrir des exemples illustrant l'importance de ces multiples témoins indirects, nous voulons attirer l'attention sur quelques phénomènes typiques des traductions arabo-latines tolédanes de la fin du XII^e siècle. Une partie importante fut réalisée par le cercle de Gérard de Crémone, dont la paternité de la traduction du *Livre de la bonté pure* ne semble plus être contestée à l'heure actuelle.

1 Doubles traductions

Le phénomène des doubles traductions a été bien attesté dans les volumes publiés de l'Avicenne latin : *De anima*, *De prima philosophia* et *Liber primus naturalium*, Tractatus I et II. Les traductions rapportées dans ces volumes datent toutes du XII^e siècle et toutes ont été faites à Tolède, bien que dans le cercle de Gundissalinus. Simone Van Riet a eu le mérite d'avoir attiré l'attention sur lui. Elle en a conclu à l'existence des deux familles, dont l'une reflète la traduction originale, l'autre un effort de révision de celle-ci, soit par un copiste,

et 202,19-21 ; 6 : T p. 166-170 (B p. 9-10) // K p. 215,11-216,3 ; 9 : T p. 181,2-184,18 (B p. 12,19-13,7) // K p. 200,22-201,10 ; 12 : T p. 192,2-193,8 (B p. 14,15-15,2) // K p. 51,24-52,4 ; **13 : T p. 195,2-5 (B p. 15,7-9) // K p. 52,11-14** ; 14 : T p. 200-202 (B p. 16) // K p. 38,15-20 (quelques modifications mineures dans la formulation) ; 20 : T p. 229-231 (B p. 22) // K p. 133,22-134,6 ; 21 : 20 : T p. 232-234 (B p. 22-23) // K p. 133,12-20 ; 22 : T p. 235,2-236,7, 237,11-12 et 238,26-30 (B p. 23,7-10,12-13 et 23,15-24,1) // K p. 147,21-148,6 ; 23 : T p. 239,2-240-10 (B p. 24,3-7) // K p. 148,7-13 ; 25 : T p. 248-251 (B p. 26) // K p. 134,7-20 (aussi p. 312,1-14) ; 26 : T. p. 252-253 (B p. 27) // K p. 148,15-20 ; **28 : T p. 258-259 (B p. 28) // K p. 312,17-22 ; 31 : T p. 273,2-274,12 (B p. 31,11-32,4) // K p. 133,4-10**.

13 Calma 2016a, p. 20-21.

14 Concernant ces trois traductions et leur signification comme témoins de la traduction latine, voir Rothschild 1994 et Rothschild 2013.

soit par le traducteur lui-même, en vue d'établir une traduction plus littérale[15]. Nous avons essayé de démontrer que ces doubles traductions furent sans doute présentes dans l'exemplaire original même du traducteur et qu'elles résultaient d'un effort pour 'latiniser' le premier essai de traduction (trop) littérale[16]. Quelle que soit l'alternative que l'on accepte parmi ces deux hypothèses, il est incontestable qu'il est possible, pour chacune de ces traductions, de distinguer l'existence des deux familles dans leur transmission. Pour chaque traduction on assiste, en outre, à l'existence de manuscrits contaminés, où des variantes spécifiques à chacune des deus familes sont attestées. L'étude systématique des doubles traductions est donc utile afin de découvrir si l'on est bien confronté à ce qui peut être qualifié de 'familles'. Comme il est incontestable que les nombreux manuscrits de la traduction latine du *Livre du Bien pur* portent beaucoup de doubles traductions, il est clair qu'il faut y prêter une attention sérieuse, car celles-ci peuvent contribuer à mieux saisir sous quelles différentes formes la traduction latine a été transmise, voire, ne fût-ce dans une mesure limitée, à établir le *stemma codicum*. Sans être exhaustif, nous proposerons dans ce qui suit quelques cas exemplaires et/ou significatifs. Nous nous limiterons en général, mais non toujours, à l'édition Pattin et à son apparat de variantes.

Nous commencerons avec un cas plutôt classique, à savoir *ergo* / *igitur* pour la conjonction arabe *fa-*. L'édition Pattin, en conformité avec six des dix manuscrits utilisés pour l'édition, porte en I, 9,23, *ergo*, mais l'expression équivalente *igitur* est attestée dans les quatre autres ; la même variante est attestée après, à savoir en I, 18, 63 (trois manuscrits dont seulement deux la portaient aussi à la première occurrence), en XIV(XV), 125,53 (un seul manuscrit où elle figurait aussi dans le premier cas, mais pas dans le deuxième), XXI(XXII), 168,77 (un manuscrit, qui porte cette variante seulement ici), XXIX(XXX), 204,84 (cinq manuscrits, dont un l'attestait aussi dans le premier et le deuxième cas ; un dans le premier et le troisième cas et enfin, un dans le seul premier cas, alors que les deux autres portaient toujours auparavant *ergo*), XXIX(XXX), 206,7 (un seul manuscrit, qui le portait aussi dans le premier, le troisième et le cinquième cas) et XXXI(XXXII), 219,12 (deux manuscrits, dont l'un en témoignait dans le premier, le troisième et le cinquième cas, et l'autre dans le deuxième et le cinquième cas). Inversement, on trouve *igitur* dans le texte et *ergo* dans l'apparat des variantes en I, 12, 39 (*ergo* : quatre manuscrits, dont deux figuraient aussi comme témoins de la variante *igitur* pour *ergo*) et en III, 36, 32 (*ergo* : un manuscrit, qui fait partie des quatre témoins du premier cas). Sans en spécifier

15 Voir Van Riet 1963 ; Avicenna latinus 1977, p. 128*–130* et Avicenna latinus 1992, p. 54*–62*.
16 Voir Janssens 2002.

le détail, mentionnons encore d'autres variantes pour *ergo*, telles que *autem*, *enim*, *unde* et *vero*. Mais le cas de *ergo* / *igitur* suffit à mettre en lumière qu'il existe une assez grande fluidité entre les deux, ce qui se laisse aisément expliquer si ce choix fut effectivement présent dans l'autographe du traducteur.

Un cas très significatif, car très fréquent, est la traduction de l'adjectif arabe *ʿaqlī* par un nombre assez important de termes différents : *intellectibilis* / *intelligibilis* / *intellectualis* / *intelligentialis* / *intelligens* / *intelligentiae* / *intellectus*[17]. L'édition porte dans la vaste majorité des cas (une quarantaine) *intellectibilis*. Mais il est frappant que l'apparat des variantes mentionne partout l'existence, dans au moins un des dix manuscrits témoins, de la variante *intelligibilis* et que celle-ci soit tout simplement la leçon de la majorité des manuscrits[18]. À plusieurs reprises, on trouve un troisième terme : *intellectualis* (dix cas), *intelligens*, *intelligentiae*, *intelligibiliter* et *intellectus* (chaque fois dans une seule instance). La présence de deux autres options outre celle d'*intelligibilis* est attestée une fois : *intellectualis* et *intelligentialis*. Par contre, les deux mots *intellectibilis* et *intelligibilis* figurent dans l'apparat des variantes, bien qu'une seule fois (en III, 36,34), alors que le *textus* porte *intelligentiae*. Ce dernier cas a de quoi surprendre, mais il est relativement bien attesté et par ailleurs confirmé par le commentaire de Gilles de Rome[19]. On peut se demander si, à l'origine, on ne lisait pas dans la traduction *eius intelligentiae* / *intellectibilis* ou *intelligibilis*[20], suivant à une hésitation selon laquelle il aurait fallu lire en arabe (*quwwa*) *ʿaqlihi* ou *ʿaqlìyya*, car immédiatement après se trouve un cas similaire : l'arabe (*quwwa*) *ḏātiyya* est traduit par (*virtutem*) *eius essentiae* (ce qui suggère la lecture *ḏātihi*) / (*virtutem*) *essentialem* (bien qu'attesté dans un manuscrit seulement)[21]. Observons toutefois que dans le cas d'*intelligentiae*, contrairement à

17 Pour ne pas compliquer inutilement les choses, nous nous limitons à utiliser le nominatif singulier et ne tenons donc pas compte du cas de déclinaison. Nous ne faisons pas non plus attention à des coquilles évidentes, comme *intellitibilem* (III, 34, 20).

18 La raison de la préférence accordée par Pattin à la leçon *intellectibilis* n'est pas claire. Il est regrettable qu'il n'ait pas explicité la raison de son choix.

19 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 12v–13rAA.

20 De nouveau, Pattin ne justifie nulle part son choix (comparez *supra*, note 18). Pourtant, ni les témoins manuscrits ni les commentaires choisis par lui pour son édition ne permettent de privilégier la leçon *intelligentiae*.

21 *Pace* Taylor 1989, p. 89, cas (14), nous ne croyons pas que le modèle arabe du traducteur latin portait seulement une leçon différente en ce qui concerne la troisième qualification, à savoir *ḏātihi* au lieu de *ḏātiyya*. Observons que l'apparat de Pattin affirme l'existence dans ce dernier cas d'*essentialis* dans le manuscrit Vat. Lat. 20984 – unique, il est vrai – indiquant ainsi que le traducteur latin, ou, à la limite, quelqu'un qui aurait révisé la traduction originale, lisait sans doute *ḏātiyya*, en conformité à la tradition manuscrite arabe (comme ce même manuscrit témoigne auparavant de la leçon *intelligentiae*, il semble

celui d'*essentiae*, la variante *intelligibilis* est présente dans un bon nombre de témoins (quatre manuscrits, l'édition latine de Bardenhewer et le commentaire de Bacon).

Quant à la variante *intellectibilis*, elle est attestée dans le manuscrit Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1415, dont Vansteenkiste a démontré le caractère relativement précieux comme témoin du texte arabe[22]. Or, depuis que Taylor a élaboré une édition non seulement sur la base du manuscrit de Leyde, mais aussi de ceux d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, il est apparu évident que le manuscrit d'Aoste, Seminario maggiore 71 (olim Ai° D 20) est lui aussi un témoin de grande valeur[23]. Il est dès lors incontestablement frappant de voir que lui aussi porte la leçon (*virtutem*) *intellectibilem*, exactement comme le manuscrit Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1415. Dans le cas présent, on peut par conséquent s'imaginer que l'archétype portait : *et virtutem intelligentiae / intelligibilem intellectibilem*, où d'une part on trouve un essai de traduction alternative suite à une hésitation entre une lecture *ʿaqliyya* et *ʿaqlihi* de l'arabe (de graphie assez similaire, surtout en absence de point diacritiques), et d'autre part l'alternative habituelle *intellectibilis* / *intelligibilis*. En outre, la leçon *intellectibilis* est (presque) partout ailleurs présente dans les deux manuscrits. Tout indique donc que ce terme, typique du néoplatonisme latin[24], soit se trouvait dans l'archétype du traducteur, sans doute accompagné de l'alternative *intelligibilis*, soit que l'un de ces deux termes a été introduit comme alternative pour l'autre relativement tôt dans la transmission de la traduction. Parmi toutes les autres options, la variante *intellectualis* est encore relativement bien attestée et il est intéressant de constater qu'*intellectualis* se trouve dans le *De anima* de l'Avicenne latin (qui, bien sûr, n'appartient pas à Gérard de Crémone, mais à Gundissalinus et à son cercle) parmi les termes qui traduisent *ʿaqlī*[25]. Le terme *intelligentialis* est certainement aussi une tra-

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exclu que cette leçon d'*essentialis* soit due à une initiative de son copiste). En plus, comme nous l'avons dit, on peut aisément s'imaginer un doute chez le traducteur concernant la façon dont on doit lire l'arabe (le même problème se posant pour *ḏātiyya*/*ḏātihi* que pour *ʿaqliyya* / *ʿaqlihi*). Enfin, sa reconstruction *et secundum virtutem intelligibilem* implique une préférence pour *intelligibilem* à l'intérieur de l'alternative *intellectibilis* / *intelligibilis*. Mais, sauf erreur de notre part, rien ne justifie une telle préférence.

22 Vansteenkiste 1967, p. 62-66.

23 Concernant la valeur précieuse de ce manuscrit, voir Taylor 1989, p. 84 et 101-102. Quelques caractéristiques particulières de ce manuscrit avaient été déjà mises en lumière par Pattin 1966, p. 104-105.

24 Vansteenkiste 1967, p. 76.

25 Avicenna latinus 1968, p. 8,99 et 28,84 (mais ce terme n'est pas utilisé dans Avicenna latinus 1972). Observons encore que la variante *intellectibilis* ne figure dans l'ensemble de cette traduction qu'une seule fois, à savoir Avicenna latinus 1968, p. 153,11 (en alternative avec *intelligibilis*).

duction valable, mais somme toute, un mot assez rare ; il n'apparaît qu'une seule fois dans un seul manuscrit[26]. Quant à l'utilisation en VII(VIII), 78,45 de l'adverbe *intelligibiliter*, attestée dans un seul manuscrit, elle s'explique par le contexte, mais il faudrait alors s'attendre à la suppression du substantif *apprehensione*, qui précède *intellectibili* dans l'édition[27]. Par contre, les termes *intelligens* et *intelligentiae* posent problème. Le dernier correspond à une leçon arabe (*al-*)*ʿaql*, mais l'utilisation d'*intelligentiae* pourrait résulter de la présence du même mot immédiatement à sa suite, alors que le premier présuppose une lecture *ʿāqil* de l'arabe. Il est intéressant de noter que ces deux variantes ne sont attestées qu'une seule fois, à savoir en III, 34,19-20, à l'intérieur d'une seule phrase et semblent donc intimement liées[28]. Enfin, tout indique que la mention d'*intellectus* (en XVIII(XIX), 149,69), attestée dans un seul manuscrit (le ms. Bruges, Bibliothèque de la ville 463), résulte d'une erreur de copiste, car l'expression *anima intellectus* est dépourvue de sens. Selon nous, sur la base de toutes les observations qui précèdent, une nouvelle édition critique devra sans doute maintenir l'alternative *intellectibilis* / *intelligibilis* dans le *textus*. Mais, si sur la base du *stemma codicum*, il est incontestable qu'un des deux termes fut présent d'abord sans alternative et que l'autre a été introduit à un moment postérieur de la transmission de la traduction, alors on pourrait opter pour ne maintenir que le terme concerné dans le *textus* en vue d'éditer la traduction originale, ou, du moins, ce qui s'en rapproche le plus.

Un autre cas intéressant est la traduction des comparatifs *arfaʿ* et *ʿalā*. En V(VI), 63,61-63, l'édition, à la ligne 61, porte dans le *textus altior* comme traduction d'*arfaʿ* et mentionne comme variante *sublimior* dans l'apparat, en faisant référence à un seul manuscrit, le ms. Tolède, Cabildo 97-1 (sur l'ensemble de dix

26 Le terme *intelligentialis* (X, 102, 62) se trouve dans le manuscrit Toledo, Cabildo 97-1. Il est attesté dans les traductions des œuvres de Proclus par Moerbeke, voir, par exemple, *Procli opuscula*, p. 120, 6, 10, mais il faudra examiner s'il ne fut déjà pas utilisé par Gérard de Crémone et son cercle. En effet, il semble possible qu'il s'agisse d'un choix du copiste inspiré par une volonté de souligner davantage le caractère proclien de l'ouvrage.

27 Le texte arabe porte : *yudriku* (…) *idrākan ʿaqliyyan*, dont *apprehendit* (…) *apprehensione intellectibili* (ou : *intelligibili*) constitue une traduction très littérale. De façon plus latinisée, on attendrait plutôt une traduction *apprehendit* (…) *intelligibiliter*. Dans le contexte, on peut donc considérer *apprehensione intellectibili* (*intelligibili*) et *intelligibiliter* comme un essai de double traduction.

28 Elles sont toutes deux présentes dans les manuscrits Vat. Lat. 2089 et Bruges, Bibliothèque de la Ville 478, mais dans ce dernier *intelligens* figure en marge, comme correction pour *intelligibilis* et est écrit d'autre main que celle du copiste original. En III, 3420, la variante *intelligentiae* se trouve confirmée en outre par le manuscrit Bruxelles, Bibliothèque royale II, 2314.

manuscrits qui constituent la base de l'édition).[29] Toutefois, deux lignes plus loin, le *textus* offre la traduction *sublimior*, présente dans tous les dix manuscrits, dont, selon l'apparat, trois (Vat. lat. 2984, Vat. Urb. lat. 206 and Paris, BnF Lat. 6318) ajoutent *subtilior* comme traduction alternative. En VI (VII), 67,76, on trouve la traduction *altior et superior* (*sublimior* dans deux manuscrits) pour l'expression arabe *arfaʿ wa-ʿalā* et, en XXI (XXII), 171,89 *superior et altior* (mais dans un manuscrit *altior et superior*) comme traduction d'*ʿalā wa-arfaʿ*[30]. Enfin, en XXII (XXIII), 174,6, *sublimior* (*subtilior* : 2 mss ; *superior* : 1 ms) *et altior* peut correspondre soit à la leçon *arfaʿ wa-ʿalā*, présente dans les manuscrits d'Istanbul et d'Ankara, soit à celle inversée, *ʿalā wa-arfaʿ*, attestée dans le manuscrit de Leyde[31]. À l'exception du premier cas, *altior* apparaît toujours sans alternative, alors que *sublimior* est accompagné deux fois de l'alternative *subtilior*, et une fois, en plus, de la variante *superior*, qui, à son tour, est clairement distingué d'*altior* en XXI(XXII), 171,89 (en outre, en V(VI), 57, 22, *superior*, sans variante aucune, traduit *ʿalā*). On aurait donc tendance à croire que *sublimior* (*subtilior* / *superior*) traduit *ʿalā* et qu'*altior* rend *arfaʿ*. Par conséquent, le témoignage unique – parmi les dix manuscrits consultés par Pattin – du manuscrit Tolède, Cabildo 97-1, de la leçon *sublimior* comme alternative pour *altior* en V(VI), 63, 61, pourrait paraître à première vue suspect. Cependant, on constate immédiatement à sa suite que *sublimior / subtilior* traduit effectivement *arfaʿ*. Le traducteur latin aurait-il lu à cet endroit dans son modèle arabe *ʿalā* ? Dans l'état actuel des choses, nous devons laisser cette question ouverte[32], mais il faudra essayer à l'occasion d'une nouvelle édition critique de résoudre ce problème délicat, surtout en vue de fixer les lexiques arabe-latin et latin-arabe.

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29 Bien qu'il énumère 92 manuscrits, Pattin s'est limité pour son édition à collationner entièrement dix manuscrits. Bien qu'il précise lui-même que son édition ne prétend pas être une édition critique définitive, il est regrettable qu'il n'ait pas expliqué les raisons de ce choix. En outre, dans quelques cas rares il prend recours à d'autres manuscrits. Là encore, il n'explique pas clairement ce qui motive son choix. Notons simplement qu'il s'est limité à collationner, pour le passage sous discussion, les dix manuscrits témoins majeurs.

30 Certes, on lit *altior* dans le *textus* de l'édition et *superior* dans l'apparat des variantes (un manuscrit), mais il ne s'agit là pas d'une vraie variante, car il y a eu inversion des deux termes. En fait, le copiste du manuscrit Vat. Lat. 2089, a clairement inversé les deux termes *altior* et *superior*, qui se trouvent tous deux très proches sur la même ligne.

31 Pour l'existence de cette lecture inversée dans la tradition arabe, voir Taylor 1981, p. 237, note 12, où il met en parallèle la traduction latine avec la leçon du manuscrit de Leyde.

32 Sauf erreur de notre part, aucun témoin arabe, direct ou indirect, ne contient une indication à cet endroit de la leçon *ʿalā*.

Un cas qui mérite une attention très particulière est celui de l'expression *non destruuntur* [*nec permutantur*] en X(XI), 101,55-56. Dans le texte arabe on lit seulement *lā tastaḥīlu*, ce qui explique que Pattin ait opté pour la suppression de *nec permutantur*. Taylor a estimé que *nec permutantur* traduit sans doute *lā tataġayyaru*, expression attestée dans le manuscrit de Leyde, mais seulement à la fin de l'affirmation qui suit dans le texte[33]. Il incline donc à y reconnaître un cas où la traduction latine témoigne d'un déplacement d'un segment de texte par rapport à l'arabe. S'il s'abstient d'offrir une explication pour ce déplacement, on pourrait songer à une mention de *nec permutantur* dans la marge de la copie du traducteur, qui, à cause d'un oubli, aurait marqué par un signe que l'expression devait être ajoutée ; après, lors de la transmission de la traduction, l'endroit du signe aurait été mal interprété par un copiste. Cette explication est en principe possible, mais loin d'être évidente. Pattin et Taylor semblent avoir perdu de vue que le verbe *permutantur* rend parfaitement le sens du verbe arabe *tastaḥīlu*, même plus que ne le fait le verbe *destruuntur*[34]. En outre, un seul des dix manuscrits utilisés pour l'édition porte *nec permutantur* ; quatre, par contre, lisent *vel permutantur* et cinq omettent l'expression[35]. Comme Vansteenkiste l'avait remarqué il y a déjà un demi-siècle, *permutantur* résulte sans doute d'un essai de double traduction par le traducteur lui-même et l'utilisation de la conjonction *vel* en constitue un indice sérieux[36]. Compte tenu de tous ces éléments, nous sommes plutôt convaincus

33 Taylor 1981, p. 466, note 88. En Taylor 1989, aucune remarque est formulée à propos du passage.

34 La traduction du verbe *istaḥāla* par *permutari* est solidement établi dans le *De anima* de l'Avicenne latin, voir Avicenna latinus 1972, p. 311 et Avicenna latinus 1968, p. 229, alors que dans le *De philosophia prima*, la traduction *permutari* est absente bien que, il est vrai à une seule occasion, le substantif *istiḥāla* y est rendu par *permutatio* – par contre, on y trouve à deux reprises la traduction alternative *destrui* (absente du *De anima*), voir Avicenna latinus 1983, p. 34.

35 Un rapide survol d'une vingtaine de manuscrits, outre ceux consultés par Pattin, nous a montré que le cas de l'omission est le mieux attesté dans la tradition manuscrite (y compris dans le manuscrit Aoste, Seminario maggiore 71). Elle est confirmée par les commentaires de Thomas d'Aquin et de Gilles de Rome et, en plus, par deux des trois traductions latin-hébraïques (mais la troisième de celles-ci confirme la leçon *nec permutantur*), voir Rothschild 1994, p. 445. Toutefois, la traduction *vel permutantur* se trouve, outre dans les quatre manuscrits désignés par Pattin, dans quelques autres, tels par exemple, Troyes, BM 1374 ; Rouen, BM 920 ; Chicago, Vault Case 23.

36 Vansteenkiste 1967, p. 63, où il note : « l'arabo ha soltanto un verbo (che significa *permutantur*, ma che viene anche tradotto con *corrumpere* e *destruere*) ; l'espressione sembra essere dunque un doppione, forse dello stesso traduttore, e potrebbe essere stato con *vel*, conservato da O [= Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1415] ». Pour le rôle des conjonctions dans la formulation de doubles traductions, voir Janssens 2002, p. 118-120.

que la leçon *non destruuntur vel permutantur* était présente dans l'exemplaire du traducteur, qui hésitait entre ces deux verbes latins pour savoir lequel rendait le mieux l'arabe – le second ayant l'avantage d'être plus littéral, le premier d'être plus adapté au sens général du chapitre. On comprend aisément qu'un copiste ait cru que ce *vel* soit inadéquat dans la mesure où il semble suggérer que les choses éternelles soit ne sont pas détruites, soit subissent un changement, et, afin d'arriver à une affirmation plus cohérente, l'a remplacé par *neque*. Un autre copiste a sans doute estimé que l'alternative était trop littérale et l'a par conséquent supprimée[37]. Il est clair que c'est cette dernière version qui a été la plus répandue. Mais, somme toute, il est hautement probable que l'expression *non destruuntur vel permutantur* corresponde le mieux à la traduction originale. Selon le poids que l'on accorde tantôt à approcher au maximum la traduction d'origine, tantôt à valoriser la réception de cette traduction, on éditera donc soit la formule telle que nous l'avons exprimée, soit on se limitera à *non destruuntur*. En aucun cas, la formule *non destruuntur neque permutantur*, que Pattin a choisie (tout en mettant entre crochets *neque permutantur*) ne mérite de figurer dans le *textus*[38].

Enfin, nous ne voulons pas passer sous silence les multiples occasions où l'on trouve, dans un ou plusieurs manuscrits, *causare* / *causatum* / *causans* au lieu de *creare* / *creatum* / *creans*, ou alors, bien que ce soit plus exceptionnel, l'inverse. On pourrait spontanément songer à un essai de traduction double (ou alternative). Généralement parlant, la variante qui ne correspond pas vraiment au terme original arabe (*causare*, etc. fautivement pour *b d ʿ* et *creare*, etc. fautivement pour *ʿ l l*) n'est attestée que dans un nombre plutôt infime de manuscrits. Tout indique qu'il s'agissait donc d'une confusion faisant suite à une lecture fautive qui a eu lieu au cours de la transmission de la traduction (la confusion entre les deux termes latins étant somme toute courante en raison des abréviations)[39]. Cependant, une étude approfondie à ce sujet est souhaitable et reste donc à faire.

37 Nous avons observé le même phénomène dans l'Avicenne latin, voir Janssens 2002, p. 118.

38 Si la traduction latine offre effectivement un essai de double traduction, elle correspond pleinement au texte arabe, tel qu'il est attesté dans les trois manuscrits connus.

39 Il est d'un intérêt particulier de remarquer que dans la *Philosophia prima* de l'Avicenne latin, ne figure qu'une seule occurrence (Avicenna latinus 1980, p. 481, 51) de *causatis* là où *creatis* était normalement attendu, ce qui conduit plutôt vers une lecture fautive que vers une réelle double traduction ou traduction alternative. De façon plutôt surprenante, S. Van Riet n'offre aucune note.

2 Traductions alternatives (de type *exclusif*)

La traduction de la conjonction *wa-* dans une et même occurrence par *et* et *sed* peut être considérée comme l'expression d'un essai de traduction alternative. Ce cas se présente en I, 11,31 et 33[40].

L'expression [*apponitur vel*] *parificatur* (II, 25,91), retenue par Pattin, est sans doute beaucoup plus significative, même si aucun des dix manuscrits témoins ne la porte[41]. Toutefois, la formule *apponitur vel parificatur* est attestée dans quelques manuscrits, tels que : Assise, BC 663 ; Berlin Staatsbibliothek, M 1494, Lat. Qu. 449 ; Munich, BSB Clm 527 et Rennes, BM 149. Mais la tradition manuscrite révèle l'existence d'une variété nettement plus grande :

– *opponitur vel parificatur* :
  Bruges, Bibliothèque de la Ville 463 ; Tolède, Bibl. del Cabildo 97-1 ; Paris, BnF, lat. 16082 ; Florence, Bibl. Laur., Ashburnham 1674 ; Bologne, Bibl. Univ. 2344 ; Rouen, BM 920 ; Troyes, BM 1374 ; Bordeaux BM 421 ; Vienne, ÖNB 2491 ; Genève, BGE, Lat. 76 ; Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 837 ; Cava de' Tirreni (Salerne), B. SS. Trinità 31 ; Madrid, BN 489. Le ms. Aoste, Sem. Magg. 71 : *opponitur* dans le texte[42], mais ajoute de *vel parificatur* dans la marge.
– *opponitur et parificatur* :
  Angers, BM 450
– *opponitur* / *parificatur* :
  Bruges BC 102/125 : *opponitur* dans le texte, *parificatur* au-dessus de la ligne ; Cologny, Bodmer CB 10 : *opponitur* dans le texte, *parificatur* (dans une autre encre) au-dessus de la ligne ;
– *opponitur* :
  Bruxelles, Bibliothèque Royale 2314 ; Assisi BC 298 ; Césène, Bibl. Malatestiana, Ms. Plut. XXII, Dext. 6 ; Paris, BnF, lat. 6318.
– *opponitur* exponctué, *parificatur* dans la marge :
  Tours, BM 680.
– *parificatur* :
  Vat. Lat. 2089 ; Oxford, Bodl., Selden sup. 24 ; Césène, Bibl. Malatestiana, Ms. Plut. XXIII, Dext. 6 ; Erfurt, Ca-2-00363 ; Évreux, BM 79 ; Berlin M 1491, Lat. Qu. 48.

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40 Taylor 1981, p. 438, notes 7 et 8, observe à juste titre que la conjonction *wa-* « may be translated here as *sed* or *et* ».

41 Pattin 1966, p. 139, note 91, affirme que le verbe *apponitur* est attesté dans le manuscrit Vat. Urb. Lat. 206, ainsi que dans le commentaire de Gilles de Rome. Cette dernière affirmation est erronée, car Gilles lit clairement le seul verbe *parificatur* (Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 8vX).

42 Taylor 1981, p. 443, lit à tort *apponitur*.

– *apponitur* :

Vat. Lat. 206 ; Vat., Ottob. Lat. 1415 ; Chicago, Vault Case MS. 23.

Notons encore que le manuscrit Erfurt, Ca-4-00018 porte *ponitur* (pour *opponitur* ?) et que le manuscrit Admont, cod. 405 est abimé à cet endroit, mais il semble que le copiste ait effacé un mot avant d'écrire *opponitur* au-dessus de la ligne. Ces manuscrits sont donc plutôt indicateurs d'une leçon qui se limite au seul verbe *opponitur*. Enfin, dans le manuscrit Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek 1339 *opponitur* a été exponctué et remplacé par *coextenditur* dans la marge par une autre main et dans une autre encre[43].

Nous inclinons à croire que le traducteur a hésité comment lire le verbe arabe : *yuḥāḏī* (*opponitur*) ou *yuǧārī* (*parificatur*)[44]. En effet, en l'absence de points diacritiques, la graphie des deux verbes arabes est très similaire. La tradition manuscrite indique de façon assez nette que les deux verbes *opponitur* et *parificatur* étaient tous deux présents dans l'archétype, pourvus ou non de la conjonction *vel*. Dans la suite, à un moment qu'il est difficile voire impossible à déterminer, on voit la suppression d'un des deux verbes, conduisant à l'existence de deux nouvelles familles, dont l'une n'atteste que le seul verbe *opponitur*, l'autre que le seul verbe *parificatur*. Le manuscrit de Tours, BM 680 est incontestablement éclairant pour ce développement, car son copiste a clairement les deux verbes sous les yeux, mais il exponctue *opponitur* et le rem-

43 Sans doute, sur la base du contexte (*quoniam extenditur cum ea*), un lecteur attentif du manuscrit aura saisi que la leçon *opponitur* fait problème et opté pour une correction en *coextenditur*, qui donne lieu, toutefois, à une affirmation assez redondante.

44 Les trois manuscrits arabes connus portent la leçon *yuǧārī* sans points diacritiques, sauf que le manuscrit de Leyde vocalise le *y* du début et suggère ainsi une lecture *tuǧārī* (voir Taylor 1981, p. 146, l. 3 [*Bāb*, 22, l. 14]). Badawi, dans son édition (voir Badawi 1955, p. 5, note 8), opte pour une lecture *yuḥāḏī*. Cette correction d'auteur ne se comprend pas facilement, car le contexte invite plutôt à lire *yuǧārī*. Aurait-elle été faite sur la base de la traduction latine ? D'autre part, nous doutons l'affirmation de Vansteenkiste (voir Vansteenkiste 1967, p. 62) selon laquelle le verbe *ǧārī* peut avoir le sens d'*opponere*. Rothschild (Rothschild 1994, p. 415, note 6) affirme que le verbe *opponere* a ici le sens secondaire de « mettre en regard » et que ce sens est attesté en latin classique, mais nous n'avons trouvé que celui de « placer devant ». En outre, d'après lui, les deux verbes *opponere* et *parificari* paraissent mieux correspondre à *ḥāḏī*, « être vis-à-vis de », ce qui nous paraît discutable. Signalons encore que dans cette même note, Rothschild indique que les trois traductions latino-hébraïques avaient dans leur modèle soit le seul verbe *opponitur*, soit le seul verbe *parificatur* : elles portent en effet trois formes différentes (*šāwwōt*, *mešuwwōt*, *yiš*^{e}*tawwōt*) de la racine *šwh* qui signifie principalement l'« égalité » et de manière moins aisée, mais possible, la « mise sur un même pied », la « comparaison » (v. Klatzkin 1933 (en hébreu), t. IV, p. 78-80) ; tant à cause du sens de la racine hébraïque que de celui des termes latins, le rapport avec *parificatur* paraît malgré tout le plus immédiat et le plus indiscutable. (Nous remercions très vivement M. Rothschild pour cette précision.)

place – en marge, il est vrai – par l'autre verbe, à savoir *parificatur*. Quant à la leçon *apponitur*, elle résulte sans doute de la démarche d'un copiste intelligent qui a saisi que la leçon *opponitur* pose problème d'un point de vue doctrinal. Afin d'y 'remédier', celui-ci a choisi le verbe *apponitur* qui se rapproche davantage de *parificatur*, sans en être pour autant un parfait synonyme, croyant vraisemblablement qu'*opponitur* était le fruit d'une lecture erronée d'*apponitur* par un copiste.

3 Omissions

Une partie importante des omissions suggérées dans l'édition Pattin sont basées sur la version du texte original tel que celui-ci a été préservé dans le manuscrit de Leyde. Souvent, pourtant, le latin se révèle ici conforme au texte arabe tel qu'il est attesté dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul. Il en va ainsi pour I, 5,16 ; VI(VII), 69,86 ; X(XI), 102,59 ; XIII(XIV), 123,43 et 123,49 ; XVI(XVII), 139,20 ; XVII(XVIII), 148,62 ; XVIII(XIX), 154,95 ; XIX(XX), 158,19 et 159,31, 34 ; XX(XXI), 164,59 et 164,60.

Des cas plus délicats constituent XXII(XXIII), 175,9 et XXIX(XXX), 204,78. Pattin y supplée chaque fois la négation *non*, ce qui s'impose en effet d'un point de vue doctrinal. Dans le premier cas, la négation *lā* est présente dans le manuscrit de Leyde (et confirmé par ʿAbd al-Lāṭif al-Baġdādī), mais pas dans ceux d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, alors que dans le second elle est absente de tous les trois témoins arabes. On peut donc se demander avec Taylor s'il est justifié de suppléer dans un cas comme dans l'autre la négation dans la traduction latine contre la tradition manuscrite arabe (surtout dans le second cas, où elle est unanime), et, ajouterions-nous, contre le témoignage du commentaire littéral de Gilles de Rome[45].

Dans deux cas, il est possible qu'il y ait eu une omission volontaire de la part du traducteur car les affirmations sont assez redondantes :

45 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 80rT et 100vE. Avant d'apporter un jugement définitif, il faudra examiner en détail l'ensemble de la tradition manuscrite de la traduction latine. Observons encore que l'absence de la négation en XXII(XXIII), 175, 9, est confirmée par les traductions hébraïques de Juda, d'Ḥabilio (à partir de la traduction latine) et de Zeraḥyah (basée directement sur le texte arabe) (voir Rothschild 1994, p. 468, note 2) et celle en XXIX(XXX), 204, 78 par celles de Juda et de Zeraḥyah, mais pas de Ḥabilio (Rothschild 1994, p. 479, note 3). Que ce dernier ait lu *non* dans son modèle, comme Rothschild le suppose, n'est pas absolument certain, car il se pourrait qu'il ait senti le besoin d'introduire la négation afin de sauvegarder la cohérence doctrinale.

– en X(XI), 102,61, la spécification « qui tombent sous la génération et la corruption (*al-wāqiʿat taḥtu l-kawn wa-l-fasād*) », car elle exprime exactement la même idée que l'adjectif *destructibiles*, qui précède ;
– en XXXII(XXXIII), 218,98, l'addition « et qu'il [à savoir un deuxième Un supposé en concurrence avec l'Un véritable] soit un comme lui (*wa-kāna wāḥidan miṯlihi*) », car il a déjà été affirmé que cet Un supposé ressemble à tous les égards à l'Un véritable.

Cependant, plutôt que de signaler une omission dans le *textus*, il nous semble préférable de formuler pour ces cas une note indiquant simplement que le texte arabe ajoute une affirmation redondante – ce qu'il est possible de faire dans un apparat qui discute le rapport précis entre le texte arabe et la traduction latine.

Quant à l'omission d'*etiam* (ar. *ayḍan*) en VI(VII), 70,90 et XV(XVI), 131,85, elle pourrait avoir sa source dans la transmission de la traduction latine. En effet, à cause de l'abréviation médiévale, un copiste a pu croire à un *iteravit* de la conjonction *et* qui précède. Mais elle pourrait aussi résulter d'un choix délibéré du traducteur ou encore de l'absence du terme *ayḍan* dans le modèle du traducteur. Si la première hypothèse s'avérait correcte et que l'on trouvait *etiam* attesté dans au moins un manuscrit, il serait préférable de l'introduire dans le *textus* et d'indiquer son omission dans un (grand) nombre de manuscrits. Mais il ne s'agit plus alors d'une omission. Quant aux deux autres hypothèses, elles reconduisent à l'idée d'une note dans un apparat séparé.

L'omission, qui est clairement présente en IX(X), 96,33, et qui est confirmée par les traductions latino-hébraïques[46], résulte probablement d'un saut du même au même, lié au texte arabe dans le modèle du traducteur : *inbijāsan kulliyyan mutawaḥḥidan… inbijāsan kulliyyan mutawaḥḥidan*[47]. Si cela s'avère correct, le traducteur latin a lu : *ʿaruḍa min ḏālika an takūna l-ṣuwar allatī tanbajasa min al-ʿuqūl al-awwal* (…) *inbijāsan kulliyyan mutawaḥḥidan*. Il a pu alors considérer la séquence *allatī… al-awwal* comme une phrase relative qui précise de quel genre de formes (*ṣuwar*) il s'agit et a pu par conséquent, lier *inbijāsan* directement avec le verbe *takūn* – verbe qu'il traduit, conformément au contexte, par *procedant* plutôt que par la traduction habituelle *sint*. Il est néanmoins intéressant de voir que Gilles de Rome insiste dans son commentaire[48] sur ce qu'implique de différent cette procession universelle des intellects premiers au niveau des intellects seconds : *supple inde accidit quod ex intelligentiis secundis procedunt formae processione particulari multiplicata*. Il couvre ainsi

46 Rothschild 1994, p. 442-443, note 1.
47 Nous remercions les participants du colloque d'avoir attiré notre attention sur l'extension précise de l'omission.
48 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 38rN.

presque littéralement une large partie de l'omission où il est explicitement dit, dans le texte arabe, que les formes « procèdent des intellects seconds selon une procession particulière et multiple » (mss Ankara et Istanbul ; ms Leyde : distincte)[49].

Un cas particulier concerne la proposition XVIII(XIX), 150,75. Comme ce cas fait partie d'une affirmation assez corrompue dans son ensemble, nous le discuterons plus tard, lorsque nous nous pencherons avec une attention particulière sur la complexité de la transmission de la traduction latine.[50]

Enfin, le passage XIX(XX), 159, 29–31, pourrait laisser croire à une seconde omission à la même ligne 31, non signalée par Pattin et qui serait à placer après la conjonction *et*. Mais la traduction latine soulève ici de larges difficultés. On peut y lire (selon l'édition Pattin) : *scilicet quando agens et factum sunt per instrumentum et* [or cette conjonction est absente dans six des dix manuscrits témoins et devrait, selon nous, être supprimée] *non facit per esse suum et sunt composita*[51]. Le texte arabe affirme : *aʿnī iḏā kāna l-fāʿil yafʿalu bi-āla lā yafʿalu bi-anniyyatihi wa-kānat anniyyatuhu murakkabat* (« je veux dire, quand l'agent agit (en utilisant) un instrument, il n'agit pas par son essence et son essence n'est pas composée »). Toutefois, le traducteur latin a lu de toute évidence dans son modèle : *aʿnī iḏā kāna l-fāʿil wa-l-mafʿul*, leçon attestée dans le manuscrit de Leyde. Cela explique le début de sa traduction, *quando agens et factum sunt per instrumentum*, à condition de comprendre *sunt per* dans le sens de « sont mis en rapport ». Immédiatement après, *non facit per esse suum*, peut sous-entendre, comme le fait le texte arabe, *agens* avant *facit*, même si ce sous-entendu reste moins évident dans la traduction latine que dans le texte arabe. Quant à la fin de sa traduction, *et sunt composita*, elle se détourne clairement de l'arabe, sauf si le substantif *anniyya* avait à faire défaut dans son modèle, ce qui n'est pas le cas dans les trois manuscrits connus. La traduction originale portait-elle alors

49 Taylor 1981, 183,16-184,17.

50 Voir *infra*, p. 295.

51 Pattin 1966, p. 179, l. 31 signale une omission après *suum*, mais celle-ci est conforme aux manuscrits arabes d'Ankara et d'Istanbul. Il est par contre plus étonnant qu'il maintienne la première occurrence de la conjonction *et* dans le *textus*, alors que la majorité de ses manuscrits l'omettent en conformité avec le texte arabe ; en plus, l'absence de la conjonction dans la traduction latine est confirmée par les traductions latino-hébraïques, voir Rothschild 1994, p. 462, où on lit dans la traduction française reposant principalement sur le texte de Juda Romano : « … par un instrument, [l'agent] n'agit pas… » (hébr. *hēm bi-kᵉlī ēynō pō ʿēl*) ; la traduction plus tardive de ʿEli Ḥabilio comporte en revanche la conjonction : *hū' be-'emṣaʿūt kelī we-lo' yīfʿal* (Rothschild 2013, p. 341). La traduction française du *Liber de causis* (voir Magnard *et alii* 1990, p. 71), ainsi que la traduction allemande (voir Fidora, Niederberger, 2001, p. 105) maintiennent la lecture de Pattin, mais suppléent, sans l'indiquer, « agent » (*Bewirkendes*) avant leur traduction du verbe *agit*.

et est esse suum compositum, ou tout simplement : *et est compositum*, en supposant que le traducteur ait estimé redondante l'addition d'*esse suum* ? Mais n'est-ce pas là modifier de façon (purement) hypothétique la traduction latine en fonction du texte arabe ? Certes, mais ce n'est qu'après examen de tous les manuscrits qu'il sera possible de décider si le traducteur a trouvé une omission dans son modèle, ou si l'omission s'est produite lors de la transmission de la traduction latine et a pu donner lieu au changement du singulier du verbe *est*, en son pluriel *sunt*, après l'omission d'*esse suum*.

4 Le latin médiéval

Notre traduction appartient au douzième siècle ; il n'est donc pas exclu que certains mots soient compris dans un sens typique au latin médiéval ou soient écrits selon une graphie spécifiquement médiévale.

En ce qui concerne la graphie, nous n'avons détecté qu'un cas qui mérite une attention particulière. Il s'agit de (*causa*) *exemplaria* pour (*causa*) *exemplaris* (XIII[XIV], 119,29). Dans la tradition manuscrite, les deux formes *exemplaria* et *exemplaris* sont attestées avec, à première vue, une légère majorité de cas portant la dernière forme, majorité parmi laquelle se trouve le manuscrit d'Aoste, Seminario maggiore 71 – mais pas le manuscrit Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1415. On voit mal pour quelle raison, si *exemplaris* se trouvait dans l'archétype, un copiste l'aurait modifié en *exemplaria*, qui est une forme extrêmement rare. Nous n'avons pas trouvé la graphie *exemplarius* comme alternative pour l'adjectif *exemplaris* dans les dictionnaires de latin médiéval à notre disposition, sauf sous une forme substantivée signifiant alors « copiste »[52]. Toutefois, Pattin avait déjà signalé que cette graphie était attestée dans le *Thesaurus linguae latinae*, où se trouve une référence unique empruntée au *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum* (*CIL*)[53]. En outre, la leçon (*causa*) *exemplaria* est présente dans le commentaire de Gilles de Rome, qui cite littéralement le passage : *hoc ergo… causa exemplaria*, pour ajouter immédiatement après *idest causa exemplaris*[54]. Cette dernière spécification montre que Gilles est conscient du

52 Latham *et alii* 1975-2013, p. 840.

53 Pattin 1966, p. 165, note *m* ; *Thesaurus linguae latinae*, tome V_2, col. 1326, avec référence à *CIL* VIII, 26622. Ce dernier présente une inscription sur une fontaine dans un jardin à Thygga (Dougga-Tunisie), mais l'honnêteté oblige à reconnaître que le mot *exemplarius* (*patrono exemplario*) résulte d'un essai de reconstruction du texte, car le monument ne porte pas davantage que *patro* (espace blanc) *plario*.

54 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 46rG. Il est étonnant que dans la citation du para-

caractère inhabituel de cette graphie, car il sent le besoin de dire explicitement qu'il y a identité de sens parfaite entre cette graphie et celle, plus habituelle, d'*exemplaris*. Plus frappant encore est le fait qu'il ne considère pas cette graphie comme fautive, ce qui aurait simplement requis une correction en *exemplaris*. Nous inclinons à croire que la *lectio difficilior* (*causa*) *exemplaria* figurait dans l'exemplaire du traducteur et a été corrigée ensuite par un copiste en *exemplaris*, qui aurait quant à lui cru à une erreur de copiste dans le modèle (erreur de copiste qui se serait produite à cause d'une attraction avec le *a* final du mot *causa* qui précède).

En III, 33,17, le texte latin selon l'édition Pattin porte *stramentum*. Ce choix peut surprendre car ce terme n'est présent que dans deux des dix manuscrits témoins. Mais l'important manuscrit Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1415 est l'un de ces deux témoins[55] ; en outre, le mot figure dans les commentaires d'Albert le Grand, Thomas d'Aquin et Gilles de Rome[56]. En latin classique ce mot signifie « ce dont on jonche le sol » ou encore « couverture » ; en latin médiéval, il peut avoir le sens plus précis de tapis (de prière), ce qui correspond plus ou moins au mot arabe *bisāṭ* présent dans le texte arabe tel qu'il est conservé dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul[57]. La remarque de Gilles de Rome dans son commen-

graphe qui commence la *Secunda pars principalis commenti*, l'édition de la Renaissance porte *exemplaris*.

55 L'autre manuscrit reconnu comme important, à savoir celui d'Aoste, propose aussi cette leçon, voir Taylor 1989, p. 89, nº. 12. Notons que Vansteenkiste 1967, p. 62-63 avait déjà indiqué qu'il fallait supprimer les crochets que Pattin avait mis autour de *stramentum*. Mais Vansteenkiste ne dit rien à propos du sens précis de ce terme dans ce cas-ci. De plus, il se base sur l'édition de Bardenhewer pour établir un lien avec le mot arabe *bisāṭ*. Cependant, il ne mentionne pas le fait que Bardenhewer a opté pour ce choix en se basant sur la traduction latine. De plus, dans son petit lexique arabo-latin, il rapporte la racine *bsṭ* (p. 70, sub 6) à trois mots latins très différents : *stramentum*, *expansus* et *simplex*, mais oublie de préciser que *stramentum* correspond à l'arabe *bisāṭ* ; *expansus* à *mabsūṭ* et *simplex* à *basīṭ* (qui, à son tour, rend le grec *ἁπλοῦς*). Suite à cette confusion due à l'approche peu rigoureuse de Vansteenkiste, Rothschild 1994, p. 418, note 10 (aussi Rothschild 2013, p. 75), a critiqué à tort – comme le montre notre exposé – le choix de la leçon *stramentum*. Rothschild considère sans doute que le fait que les traductions latino-hébraiques témoignent toutes de la leçon "instrumentum", vient renforcer sa critique. Il est toutefois regrettable qu'il ignore la présence de *bisāṭ* dans deux des trois manuscrits arabes connus (et dans un des témoins indirects arabes, voir *infra*, note 57). Par contre, il explique très bien comment un copiste a pu lire facilement *sicut instrumentum* au lieu de *sicut*(*i*) *stramentum*.

56 Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis*, p. 80, l. 24 et p. 87, l. 48 ; Thomas d'Aquin, *Expositio super Librum de causis*, p. 23, l. 11 ; Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 12v.

57 Pour ce sens en latin médiéval, voir *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon*, p. 994 ; pour « tapis (étendu) » comme traduisant *bisāṭ*, voir *Dictionnaire arabe-français*, t. I, p. 126. Observons encore que la leçon *bisāṭ* n'est pas seulement celle des manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul,

taire nous semble pourtant d'une signification capitale lorsqu'il note, après avoir cité le bout de phrase (*causavit animam*) : « posuit eam sicut stramentum : aliqui textus habent instrumentum sed melior littera est que dicit stramentum ». Gilles a accès à plusieurs, en tout cas au moins deux manuscrits, où il a pu lire tantôt *stramentum*, tantôt *instrumentum*[58]. Sans hésitation aucune, il opte pour la première de ses lectures et indique que cela implique que la Cause première *stravit eam* [à savoir, l'âme] *operationi intelligentiae*. Par ailleurs, la leçon *stramentum* est confirmée dans le commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin qui offre une explication identique à celle de Gilles, la seule différence étant que Gilles utilise le verbe *stravit*, alors que Thomas opte pour *substravit*. Mais les deux verbes ont fondamentalement le même sens[59]. Dans le contexte philosophique du *Liber de causis*, le mot paraît donc avoir plutôt le sens de « substrat », de quelque chose qui sert de « fondement », or c'est un sens attesté en latin médiéval.[60]

Une compréhension spécifiquement médiévale du verbe *sequi* est sans doute en jeu en I, 3,8 (*sequitur*). Richard Taylor a déjà bien expliqué que le verbe arabe *waliya* – dont la signification usuelle est « suivre » – a ici le sens de « être adjacent à » et opte en conséquence pour une lecture en latin (lignes 9-10) *causa universalis secunda quae sequitur ipsum* [à savoir, le *causatum*] au lieu de : *causa universalis secunda quae sequitur ipsam* [à savoir, la *causa prima*], lecture présente dans l'édition Pattin[61]. Mais n'est-ce pas imposer au verbe latin un sens qu'il n'a nullement ? Jean-Pierre Rothschild fait état d'une traduction malencontreuse et inexacte, dont les traducteurs hébraïques ne sont pas venus à bout ou dont ils ont escamoté la difficulté[62]. Par ailleurs, dans les commentaires d'Albert le Grand, Guillaume de Leus et Johannes Wenck figure la leçon *sequitur ipsam*[63], conformément à la majorité des manuscrits témoins de l'édition Pattin[64]. Néanmoins, la consultation d'une trentaine de manuscrits nous a révélé qu'un peu plus de la moitié d'entre eux témoignent

mais elle est confirmée, en outre, par le *Kitāb al-fuṣūl fī l-maʿālim* d'al-ʿĀmirī (voir Wakelnig 2006, p. 182).

58 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 12v.

59 Thomas d'Aquin, *Expositio super Librum de causis*, p. 23.

60 Fuchs *et alii* 1970-2005, vol. VII, p. S 788. Magnard *et alii* 1990, p. 43, traduit *stramentum* par « une assise (pour) », alors que Fidora, Niederberger 2001, p. 43, la rendent par *Unterlage*. Il se pourrait que la compréhension philosophique au moyen âge du mot *stramentum* comme « substrat » ait eu son origine dans le passage sous discussion.

61 Taylor 1978, spécialement p. 170-172.

62 Rothschild 2013, p. 74.

63 Voir respectivement Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis*, p. 67, l. 63 ; Carron 2016, p. 531, l. 24 ; Meliadò 2016, p. 262, l. 8.

64 Pattin 1966, p. 134, note 8 indique que seulement deux des dix manuscrits consultés par lui

d'une leçon *ipsum*, ce qui est une indication sérieuse en faveur de l'hypothèse selon laquelle cette *lectio difficilior* était effectivement celle du traducteur lui-même. Comme l'a observé Taylor, la variante *ipsam* a toutes les chances d'être le fruit de l'intervention d'un copiste, qui a constaté une contradiction inhérente à l'affirmation, en comprenant le verbe *sequitur* dans son sens ordinaire de « suit ». Mais le verbe latin peut-il avoir une autre sens ? Cette idée est loin d'être évidente si l'on consulte les dictionnaires de latin classique et de latin médiéval. Néanmoins, nous avons trouvé dans le *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* un sens qui n'inclut pas l'idée d'une suite successive, à savoir « se rattacher à »[65]. Si ce sens n'exprime pas exactement l'idée de « être adjacent à », il évite néanmoins l'idée d'une « suite ». On ne peut donc nullement exclure que Gérard de Crémone, comme traducteur latin, ait donné ce sens, ou un sens qui lui soit proche, au verbe *sequi* à l'intérieur de ce contexte.

Un dernier cas qui mérite l'attention est l'utilisation du verbe *excusare* en I, 4,11 comme traduction du verbe *istaġnā* (*ʿan*), « être capable de se dispenser (de quelque chose) », « ne pas avoir besoin (de quelque chose) », incluant donc l'idée d'« être suffisant à soi-même ». Nous avons cherché en vain un tel sens dans un dictionnaire de latin. Rothschild, conscient du problème, signale que le verbe latin, pourrait avoir signifié ici, au vu de l'arabe, « être exempt, dispensé »[66]. De façon surprenante, un sens semblable prévaut dans la traduction de certaines parties des livres naturels du *Shifāʾ* d'Avicenne effectuée à Burgos entre 1275 et 1280[67]. D'autre part, dans la traduction du *De anima* de ce même ouvrage, réalisée un siècle plutôt à Tolède par Gundissalinus et Avendauth, le verbe *excusare* traduit à deux reprises l'arabe *kafā*, qui peut signifier « avoir quelqu'un exempt de »[68]. Notons enfin que dans le *Flos Alfarabii* (traduction partielle des *ʿUyūn al-masāʾil* généralement attribuée à Gun-

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portent *ipsum*. Cela n'est pas correct, car au moins un des huit autres manuscrits, à savoir Bruges, Bibliothèque de la ville 463 (ms A de Pattin), a cette leçon.

65 *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon*, p. 960.

66 Rothschild 2013, p. 76.

67 Avicenna latinus 1987, p. 4, l. 49 : *excusatum est a* (*probatione*) dans un contexte où il est affirmé que ce qui est évident *est exempt de* preuve ; p. 127, l. 81 : *excusat* (*dicere istam dubitationem*), à savoir qu'on *est dispensé d*'exposer le doute évoqué auparavant ; et Avicenna latinus 1989, p. 75, 1 : (*nos*) *excusat a* (*reiteratione*), signifiant ici « nous *exempt* de répéter » (dans les trois cas, le texte arabe porte *yuġnī* [*ʿan*]). Pour la datation de cette traduction, voir Avicenna latinus 1987, p. 67*–68*.

68 Avicenna latinus 1968, p. 183, 94 : *excusat* (*nos ab hoc labore*), signifiant ici « nous *exempte* de ce fardeau », et Avicenna latinus 1972, p. 234, l. 83 : *excusat* (*laborem egrediendi spiritum ad aerem*), ce qui veut dire en contexte « *dispense* le *pneuma* de la peine de se mouvoir vers l'air ». Pour la datation de cette traduction, voir Avicenna latinus 1972, p. 92*–95* ; en ce qui concerne les noms de ces traducteurs, voir ibid., p. 98*–103*.

dissalinus) on trouve *et non excusatio esse eius a causa* pour traduire *fa-lā ġaniya bi-wuǧūdihi ʿan al-ʿilla*, « car il [= le possible] ne peut pas être exempt de cause quand il existe »[69]. Sur base de ces constatations, il paraît donc raisonnable de penser que le verbe *excusare* pouvait, dès la seconde moitié du douzième siècle, avoir le sens de « dispenser », « exempter ». Reste par contre le problème de savoir s'il faut lire avec l'édition Pattin : *excusat*, ou s'il faut préférer, comme le suggèrent Vansteenkiste et Rothschild, la variante *excusatur*[70]. Les deux formes sont attestées dans la tradition manuscrite, mais, sur la base d'un survol d'une trentaine de manuscrits, la forme passive s'avère la plus établie. Elle est en plus présente dans les commentaires de Guillaume de Leus et Johannes Wenck[71]. Enfin, elle semble être confirmée par les trois traductions latino-hébraïques[72]. Par contre, un bon nombre de manuscrits, dont l'Ottobonianus et celui d'Aoste, portent la forme active, qui a très vraisemblablement constitué la base de la traduction latino-hébraïque de Ḥabilio. Il n'est donc pas aisé de trancher. Certes, on peut admettre avec Rothschild que la forme passive semble préférable d'un point de vue grammatical, mais est-ce suffisant ? Enfin, il existe encore un problème additionnel, car on trouve une troisième variante, à savoir *excludit*, attestée au moins dans le manuscrit St. Gallen, Stiftsbibl., Cod. Sang. 837, f. 22. Le même verbe, au passif cette fois, se retrouve dans le commentaire de Gilles de Rome, f. 2rK, qui explique la citation « non excluditur ipsius [i.e., *causae secundae*] actio a causa prima quae est supra ipsam » de la façon suivante : « quasi dicat quod actio causae secundae non excludit immo praesupponit actionem causae primae ». Il semble que Gilles trouve la formulation de la traduction latine inhabituelle et sente par conséquent le besoin de la reformuler (*quasi dicat*) dans un latin plus ordinaire. Il est pourtant frappant de voir qu'il ne mentionne pas la leçon *excusat* / *excusatur*, ce qui indique qu'il ne l'a nulle part vue dans la

69 Cruz Hernández 1951, p. 308, l. 40 (arabe) et p. 317, l. 14-15 (latin).

70 Vansteenkiste 1967, p. 78 ; Rothschild 1994, p. 408 (note 5B) et 2013, p. 76.

71 Carron 2016, p. 532, l. 1 ; Meliadò 2016, p. 262, l. 1. Observons que Pattin 1966, 134, note 11 indique de façon injustifiée que le commentaire de Guillaume porte la variante *excluditur*. En fait, celle-ci est présente dans le commentaire de Gilles de Rome (voir la suite de l'exposé).

72 Rothschild 2013, p. 292-293. Hillel : *lo' tippāšēr peʿullat ha-riʾšōnāh*, « l'action de la première ne se dissout pas » ; Juda Romano : *lo' tūsar peʿullat ha-riʾšōnāh*, « l'action de la première n'est pas ôtée » ; ʿEli Ḥabilio : *lo' yeḥdal ʿim zeh poʿal ha-sibbāh ha-riʾšōnāh*, « l'action de la cause première ne cesse pas pour autant ». La première et la troisième de ces traductions semblent reposer plutôt sur *excusatur*, la seconde pourrait se justifier aussi à partir d'*excluditur*. M. Rothschild nous signale que, par suite d'une erreur de renvoi au texte, les citations de l'hébreu dans son article de 1994, p. 407, n. 5 et dans celui de 2013, p. 76 sont inadéquates.

documentation à sa disposition, qui impliquait l'accès à au moins deux manuscrits, comme nous l'avons déjà montré[73].

5 Complexité de la transmission de la traduction

Dans ce qui suit, nous ne discuterons pas tous les passages qui risquent de soulever des difficultés sérieuses à tout qui se voudrait le futur éditeur d'une nouvelle édition critique. Nous nous bornerons à discuter, à titre d'exemple, trois cas à propos desquels Taylor a proposé une autre lecture que celle de l'édition Pattin.

(1) En I, 17,59-62, on lit dans l'édition Pattin : « Quod est quia causa secunda quando facit rem, influit causa prima quae est supra eam super illam rem de virtute sua, *quare adhaerit ei adhaerentia vehementi* et servat eam ». Taylor propose, sur la base de l'arabe *fa-tulzima ḏālika l-shay'a luzūman šadīdan* qui signifie « en sorte qu'elle [= la première cause) adhère à cette chose », ainsi qu'en tenant compte de plusieurs manuscrits parmi lesquels Aoste et Vatican Ottobonianus, de lire le segment de phrase en italiques de la manière suivante : « quare adhaerit illud rei adhaerentia vehementi »[74]. Cette lecture trouve un appui indirect dans le commentaire d'Albert le Grand, car elle a *infixum adhaerat rei*, ce qui indique qu'Albert avait *illud* dans son modèle et l'a interprété comme *infixum*[75]. D'autres commentateurs, comme Gilles de Rome, Guillaume de Leus et Johannes Wenk confirment par contre la leçon *ei*, mais tant Gilles que Guillaume comprennent ce pronom comme faisant référence à la cause seconde, et non à la chose produite par celle-ci[76]. Cette position a de quoi surprendre, car il semble plus naturel de comprendre le pronom *ei*

73 Voir *supra*, p. 293.

74 Fidora, Niederberger 2001, p. 38 adoptent cette variante en latin, mais ils traduisent (ibid., p. 39) : « weshalb sie jenem Ding stärker anhaftet », ce qui présuppose clairement une leçon *illi rei*, non *illud rei*.

75 Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis*, p. 68, l. 33-34. En interprétant ainsi *illud*, et non en termes de l'action divine ni encore moins de Dieu comme cause première lui-même, Albert écarte complètement toute connotation panthéiste, voire panenthéiste. Selon Pattin (Pattin 1966, p. 137, note 61), le commentaire de Bacon porterait aussi de la leçon *illud rei*, mais nous n'avons pas trouvé un seul passage qui en témoignerait. Par contre, la leçon est effectivement présente dans l'édition du *Liber de causis* qui suit celle du commentaire, voir Roger Bacon, *Quaestiones supra Librum de causis*, p. 162, l. 15.

76 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 5vHH ; Carron 2016, p. 537, l. 6 ; Meliadò 2016, p. 264, l. 9.

comme relaté à *illam rem* qui précède, donc en accord avec l'arabe : à la chose produite par la cause seconde[77]. C'est ainsi qu'au moins deux des traductions latino-hébraïques l'ont compris, lisant sans doute dans leur *Vorlage* : *illi rei*[78]. Quand on regarde l'apparat de l'édition Pattin, on a l'impression que les deux variantes figurent dans un nombre presque égal des manuscrits. Un sondage effectué dans une trentaine de manuscrits nous a révélé qu'il n'en est pas ainsi. En fait, un peu plus de la moitié de ces manuscrits portent la leçon *illud rei* et seulement un cinquième *ei*. N'est-ce pas là une indication sérieuse en faveur de la proposition de Taylor de remplacer cette dernière par la première ? Et cela d'autant plus qu'elle correspond à une lecture de l'arabe *fa-yulzima* (éd. Taylor : *fa-tulzima*) *ḏālika l-shay'a luzūman šadīdan*, attestée dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul[79], où *ḏālika* figure comme sujet de la phrase. Cette piste écarte pourtant complètement le problème que soulève de toute évidence cette leçon. En effet, à quoi le pronom *illud / ḏālika* se réfère-t-il ? La réponse est sans doute : « le fait que la cause première, qui est au-dessus de la cause seconde, influe sur la chose, produite par celle-ci, de sa propre puissance », bref, l'action d'influer de la cause première. Si cette lecture n'est pas entièrement dépourvue de sens, elle ne tient pas compte de l'affirmation qui vient tout de suite après, selon laquelle c'est plutôt la cause lointaine elle-même, et non son action, qui continue à adhérer à la chose sur laquelle elle influe sa puissance, et qu'elle conserve après que la cause prochaine s'en soit séparée : « Iam ergo manifestum est et planum quod causa longinqua est vehementius causa rei (…), et quod ipsa influit virtutem suam super et servat eam (…), immo remanet in ea et adhaeret ei adhaerentia vehementi, secundum quod ostendimus et exposuimus ».

En outre, d'un point de vue purement grammatical, tant en arabe qu'en latin, il est loin d'être évident que ce pronom démonstratif puisse se référer

77 Il en va ainsi de la traduction française, basée sur une lecture du latin *ei* : « La raison en est que lorsque la cause seconde produit une chose, la cause première, qui est au-dessus d'elle, influe sur cette chose de par sa propre puissance. C'est pourquoi elle y [faisant référence sans ambiguïté aucune à 'cette chose'] adhère d'une adhérence plus forte et la conserve » (Magnard et al. 1990, p. 41).

78 Rothschild 1994, p. 406, traduit l'hébreu de Juda Romano : « et [sous-entendu : la cause première] y (= cette chose, produite par la cause seconde et recevant l'influence de la cause première) adhère » ; mais Juda Romano explicite : *tidd^{e}baq ʿim ōtō ha-dābār*, « elle adhère à cette même chose » ; de même ʿEli Ḥabilio : *hīʾ meḥubberet la-dābār ha-hūʾ*, « elle est attachée à la chose en question » ; Hillel seul emploie des pronoms dont les référents sont incertains, lisant probablement *ei* (Rothschild 2013, p. 294-295).

79 En l'absence de points diacritiques, comme c'était souvent le cas dans les manuscrits anciens, la graphie des deux formes du verbe est identique et les deux lectures sont donc également possibles. Taylor 1981, p. 142, note 39-40 remarque que les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul (qui ne sont pas datés, mais relativement tardifs) portent la vocalisation *yu*.

à l'ensemble de la phrase qui précède. On s'attend plutôt à ce qu'il soit lié avec le mot qui suit, qui est *rei* / *l-shay'a*[80]. Dans ce sens, l'utilisation du pronom *ei* se révèle plus adéquate, car il réfère à « cette chose-là », nonobstant son identification dans certains commentaires avec la cause seconde, comme nous l'avons indiqué plus haut. Toutefois, on ne peut pas ignorer l'attestation massive de la formulation *illud rei*. Pourrait-on imaginer à sa base une lecture fautive d'*illi rei* ? Comme nous avons découvert cette dernière leçon dans trois manuscrits, à savoir, Césène, Bibl. Malatestiana, Plut. XXIII, Dext. 6 ; Vienne, ÖNB 2491 et Angers, BM 450[81], cette hypothèse gagne en probabilité, d'autant plus que le « i » d'*illi* est pourvu d'un petit accent, comme d'ailleurs aussi le « i » du mot *rei* qui suit. Un copiste pourrait avoir lu ce « i avec accent » comme un « d » et avoir transformé ainsi *illi* en *illud*. Mais cela n'est pas à notre avis la seule explication possible. En effet, s'il ne fait pas de doute que la leçon *illi rei* fut présente dans l'archétype, car elle rend l'arabe de façon parfaite, on ne peut pourtant pas exclure qu'*illud rei* y figurait comme traduction alternative, dans la mesure où le traducteur hésitait entre un pronom démonstratif lié à un substantif ou un sujet de la phrase où il est question d'adhérence[82]. En somme, on se trouve devant un choix compliqué quant à ce qu'il faudrait mettre dans le *textus* d'une éventuelle nouvelle édition critique : (1) *illi rei*, en fonction de la compréhension la plus évidente du texte l'arabe, qui paraît aussi avoir à son crédit l'hébreu de deux des traducteurs, à moins qu'elle ne procède que d'un effort d'éclaircissement de la part de ceux-ci ; ou (2) *illud rei*, en tenant compte de ce dont témoignent la majorité des manuscrits ; ou encore (3) tout simplement *ei*, sur la base de la tradition des commentaires, mais, en même temps, d'une minorité importante de manuscrits et d'une des traductions latino-hébraïques.

(2) En XI(XII), 107,79, on lit dans l'édition Pattin : *agens in rem*, à corriger selon Taylor en *agens* (ou, éventuellement, *agens vel quae est*) *in re*, car le texte arabe porte : (*al-shay'*) *al-kā'in fī l-shay'*, « (la chose) qui est dans la chose »[83]. Dans la partie de la tradition manuscrite que nous avons examinée, nous avons découvert que la vaste majorité porte ou bien *agens in rem*, ou bien *agens in re*, sans qu'une nette préférence pour une de ces deux variantes ne se dessine, ce

80 La traduction anglaise que Taylor (voir Taylor 1981, p. 285) propose du texte arabe, à savoir : « strongly adheres to that thing », en constitue une illustration parfaite.

81 En outre, il est à noter que le manuscrit St. Gallen, Stiftsbibl., Cod. Sang. 837 présente *illi* sans l'addition *rei*.

82 Ce problème se posait certainement si le traducteur, dans son modèle, lisait *fa-yulzima*, car dans le texte arabe aucun substantif masculin ne précède à l'intérieur de la même affirmation ; cette observation est à l'origine de la vocalisation *tu*(*lzima*) dans l'édition du texte arabe de Taylor (Taylor 1981, p. 351-352).

83 Taylor 1989, p. 94, notes 45-46.

qui ne correspond pas vraiment à ce que l'apparat de Pattin laisse croire. Les commentaires de Gilles de Rome et de Thomas d'Aquin suivent clairement la première leçon, tandis que les traditions latino-hébraïques avaient pour base un modèle où figurait la dernière[84]. Si on veut rester le plus proche du texte original arabe, il est clair que la dernière variante doit être retenue pour l'édition, mais si on tient compte de la réception de la traduction latine dans les commentaires, on ne peut pas ignorer la première sans plus d'égards. Selon nous, il ne faudra pas uniquement la signaler dans l'apparat des variantes, mais également insister sur son importance particulière d'une façon ou d'une autre[85]. Reste le fait qu'*agens* a de quoi surprendre comme traduction de *kā'in*. Même si on le comprend dans le sens de « étant actif dans », qui est un de ses sens possibles en latin médiéval[86], il s'agit toujours d'une traduction interprétative[87]. Il n'est donc pas sans intérêt de constater que dans quatre des dix manuscrits témoins de l'édition Pattin, la leçon *agens vel quae est in re* est attestée. Il s'agit sans doute d'un essai de double traduction, où la traduction *quae est* constitue une traduction assez littérale, alors que la traduction *agens* se présente davantage comme une traduction libre, inspirée en toute probabilité par la qualification *per modum causae* qui suit[88]. En outre, plusieurs manuscrits, par exemple Vat. Urb. lat. 206, Assise, BC 298 et Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek 1382, témoignent de la variante : *agens secundum quod est*. La formule *res agens vel quae est in re* a-t-elle été jugée peu claire par un copiste et a-t-il opté pour une correction *ad sensum* en remplaçant *quae est* par *secundum quod* ?

84 Pour les premières, voir Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 41rH et Thomas d'Aquin, *Expositio super Librum de causis*, p. 80, l. 26 (*secundum quod causa agit in effectum*) ; concernant les traductions latino-hébraïques, voir Rothschild 1994, p. 445 : « (la chose) qui agit (comme cause) dans une autre (…) n'est en elle (…) » (*ha-dābār ha-pō'ēl be-dābār* […] *ēynō/ēynennū bō* […]), chez Juda Romano et chez 'Eli Ḥabilio ; Hillel de Vérone omet tout le développement de cette proposition (Rothschild 2013, p. 320-321).

85 Même si tout laisse croire que la variante *agens in rem* résulte de l'initiative d'un copiste, qui comprenait *agens in* dans son sens obvie, à savoir « agissant sur », et a par conséquent choisi de mettre ce qui en constitue l'objet à l'accusatif au lieu de l'ablatif, nous serions tentés de mentionner les deux variantes dans le *textus* (mais en indiquant la deuxième avec un astérisque), car celle-ci a clairement influencé la compréhension de plusieurs commentateurs latins.

86 Prinz *et alii* 1959 sqq., vol. 1, p. 401.

87 Dans les lexiques publiés de l'Avicenne latin, nous avons trouvé un seul endroit où le verbe *kāna* a été rendu en termes d'« *agere* », à savoir dans le *De anima* (voir Avicenna latinus 1968, p. 30, l. 3), mais c'est à l'intérieur d'une phrase dont la traduction latine dévie sensiblement de l'arabe (voir Avicenna latinus 1968, p. 30, note 2-3).

88 Outre les quatre manuscrits auxquels Pattin se réfère, on trouve la même variante dans le manuscrit d'Angers, BM 450.

D'autres variantes significatives de cette formule se trouvent dans (au moins) deux manuscrits : Paris, BnF 6569, qui porte *agens in rem* (mais avec la lettre 'm' exponctuée) sur la ligne, et *quae est* au-dessus de la ligne ; et Chicago, Vault Case 23, qui présente la formulation complexe *agens in rem vel quae est in re*. Le manuscrit de Chicago pourrait témoigner de ce que son copiste ait observé l'existence de la double traduction, mais aussi celle de la variante *agens in rem*, et ait alors estimé qu'en offrant la formule qui est la sienne, il articulait la vraie alternative telle que la traduction originale l'avait exprimée. Ou bien l'archétype de la traduction portait-il vraiment *agens in rem*, le traducteur ayant, après révision, exponctué le *m* d'*in rem* et ajouté au-dessus de la ligne *et quae est*, comme peut le suggérer le manuscrit de Paris ? En absence d'un survol complet de tous les manuscrits, il est prématuré de décider, mais tout indique néanmoins que la traduction latine portait à l'origine, ou sinon très tôt lors de sa transmission, un essai de double traduction. Ce que Taylor avait quelque part pressenti, se révèle de plus en plus une quasi-certitude.

En XVIII(XIX), 150,75-77, Pattin présente la lecture suivante : « Et hoc non fit ita nisi quoniam est ipsa ⟨…⟩ neque intellectualis tota neque animalis tota neque corporea tota, neque pendet per causam (…) ». Taylor, de son côté, propose de lire : « Et hoc non fit ita nisi quoniam est ipsa expositio neque intellectualis tota neque animalis tota neque corporea tota, neque [Taylor 1981 : *non*] pendet per causam (…) »[89]. En effet, le mot *expositio* est attesté dans les manuscrits Oxford, Bodleian Selden sup. 24 (comme Pattin l'avait déjà signalé) et Aoste ; il constitue une traduction qui, bien que ne convenant pas au contexte, rend littéralement le terme arabe *šarḥ*, présent dans les trois manuscrits témoins du texte arabe[90]. De surcroît, on peut invoquer deux témoins indirects en faveur d'une mention explicite de ce mot : le commentaire d'Albert le Grand, ainsi que la traduction latino-hébraïque de Juda[91]. Malheureusement, Taylor a perdu de vue que les mots *est ipsa*, ainsi que la conjonction *neque* avant

89 Taylor 1989, p. 97, note 58. Concernant la proposition de lire *non*, voir Taylor 1981, p. 485, note 136 ; cette note n'est pas reprise dans son article de 1989, sans doute parce qu'il s'est aperçu entretemps qu'une telle lecture pose grammaticalement problème.

90 La leçon *šarǧ* retenue par Bardenhewer (Bardenhewer 1882, p. 94, l. 1) résulte d'une correction d'auteur (voir l'apparat l. 1) ; il nous paraît difficile de considérer ce mot comme un équivalent possible du grec *genos*, comme Rothschild (Rothschild 1994, p. 460, note 6) le suggère.

91 Pour le premier, voir Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis*, p. 155, l. 10-18 : « *Et huius quidem causa non est alia nisi quia ipsa anima secundum quod anima est, secundum totum suum esse, nec est* expositio *sive expressio sive sigillatio intelligentiae, ut tota scilicet intellectualis* (…). *Et anima quidem non pendet per causam quae est supra eam* ». Pour le second, la traduction est : « parce que toute *explication* (*ba-ʿabūr* [*heyōt*] *kol bēʾūr*) », voir Rothschild 1994, p. 460, note 6 ; Ḥabilio (… *le-mah še-hīʾ ēynāh śikhlīt kullāh*…) traduit

intellectualis sont absents des deux manuscrits mentionnés et qu'ils portent tous deux à la fin *non pendet*. Par conséquent, la reconstruction correcte serait : « Et hoc non fit ita nisi quoniam expositio intellectualis tota neque animalis tota neque corporea tota, non pendet per causam (…) »[92]. Mais les manuscrits latins témoignent d'une variété assez surprenante à cet endroit. Nous ne pouvons pas présenter tous les détails dans ces pages, mais pour notre propos il est important de constater que la formule *neque pendet* est attestée de façon limitée. Selon notre documentation, la plupart des manuscrits comportent *non pendet* (ou *non penderet* / *non pendent*) et le verbe *est* après *quoniam*. Toutefois, une grande diversité de variantes viennent après cette dernière conjonction : *ipsa intelligibilis*, *ipsa neque intelligibilis*, *intellectibilis ipsa*, *ipsa scilicet anima*, *intelligibilis tota*, *intelligibilis atque*, *ex ipso*, *dispositio*, voire *exputo* et *ex tempore* (?).

Ensuite, il est à noter qu'aucun des manuscrits que nous avons consultés (en plus de ceux déjà utilisés par Pattin) ne porte explicitement le mot *expositio* et que son attestation se limite donc à deux manuscrits sur un ensemble d'une quarantaine, plus le modèle du traducteur hébreu Juda Romano. Toutefois, la variante *exputo*, dépourvue de sens, qui se lit dans le manuscrit Cologny, Bodmer CB 10, est relativement proche d'*expositio* et, compte tenu de l'abréviation habituelle de ce dernier, s'explique facilement par une lecture erronée, suite à un manque d'attention porté au contexte. La même explication pourrait être valable pour la variante *ex ipso* attestée dans plusieurs manuscrits. Par contre, la variante *dispositio* qui est présente dans les manuscrits Cava de' Tirreni (Salerne), B. SS. Trinità 31, et Genève, BGE, Lat. 76, pourrait témoigner d'un essai de traduction alternative. Nous avons déjà noté qu'*expositio* est une traduction en soi correcte du mot arabe *šarḥ*. Mais il est clair que dans notre texte ce dernier n'est pas utilisé dans son sens habituel. Comme dans les *Plotiniana arabica*, il signifie plutôt « arrangement », « ordre »[93]. Comme il s'agit là d'un des sens possibles du mot *dispositio* en latin médiéval[94], on a l'impression que son choix ne dépend pas du hasard, mais d'une initiative délibérée, sans doute du traducteur lui-même qui, ayant saisi que sa traduction littérale *expositio* posait

littéralement *quoniam est ipsa neque intellectibilis tota* ; Hillel de Vérone omet le développement (Rothschild 2013, p. 336-337).

92 Nous ne tenons pas compte ici de l'addition (accidentelle ?) de *ex ea est* après *corporea* dans le manuscrit d'Oxford, Bodl., Selden sup. 24.

93 Voir Badawi 1955, p. 20, note 2 ; pour un exemple concret, voir, par exemple, *Épitre sur la science divine*, Badawi 1955, p. 178, l. 4, où le terme – tout en étant lié par un *wa-* epéxégétique avec le mot *niẓām-* (« ordre »), est traduit : « arrangement » par Geoffrey Lewis (voir *Plotini Opera*, t. II. *Enn.* IV-VI, 1959, p. 333).

94 Voire Latham *et alii* 1975-2013, p. 692.

problème, a opté pour une alternative qui rende mieux le sens spécifique et exceptionnel du terme arabe dans ce contexte. Par conséquent, on ne peut nullement exclure la lecture suivante dans l'exemplaire du traducteur : *quoniam expositio dispositio* (ce dernier mot a peut-être écrit en marge ou *supra lineam*). Faut-il en déduire que la lecture de l'édition Pattin doit être ignorée ? Nous ne le croyons pas. Certes, elle n'est justifiée que par un nombre relativement limité de manuscrits, mais elle trouve un support indirect dans le commentaire de Gilles de Rome et, en outre, dans la traduction latino-hébraïque de Ḥabillo[95]. Elle est donc significative au niveau de l'histoire de la réception. Mais on ne peut pas entièrement exclure qu'elle remonte en fin de compte au traducteur lui-même. La disparité de la tradition manuscrite invite à la prudence. Ce n'est que sur la base d'un solide et précis *stemma codicum* qu'il sera possible se prononcer à ce propos.

6 Traductions posant problème en comparaison avec le texte arabe

À nouveau, nous nous limitons à trois cas exemplaires.

(1) En XIX(XX), 158,15-17, l'édition Pattin porte : « (…) ita quod est bonitas, et bonitas [et virtus] et ens sunt res una. Sicut ergo ens primum et bonitas sunt res una ». Taylor, qui se fonde sur l'arabe et sur un nombre important de manuscrits latins, opte pour l'omission au lieu de la suppression de *et virtus*[96]. Dans sa thèse, il remarque en outre que la fin de la traduction latine se détourne du texte arabe, où se trouve : *fa-ka-mā ṣārat al-huwiyya*

95 Respectivement, Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 64vR–65rR, Rothschild 1994, p. 460, note 6.

96 Taylor 1989, p. 98, note 62. Taylor, dans sa thèse, remarque en plus qu'il comprend l'arabe d'une façon différente de la traduction latine, bien que celle-ci soit en soi possible (Taylor 1981, p. 488, note 144). La différence d'interprétation consiste surtout dans la compréhension de la préposition *bi-annahu*, que le traducteur latin a rendu par *ita quod*, alors que Taylor la rend par : « by virtue of ». De façon un peu surprenante, la traduction latino-hébraïque de Juda Romano porte la leçon *be-derekh še-*, que Rothschild (Rothschild 1994, p. 462) traduit : « en tant que », ce qui semble plutôt correspondre à une lecture de la traduction latine : *inquantum* (en raison d'une confusion avec *ita quod* ou traduction alternative présente dans l'archétype du traducteur, mais nous n'en avons pas encore trouvé confirmation dans la tradition manuscrite latine) ; Ḥabilio porte *'im*, « si », mais la suite est altérée : *'im hāyāh ha-ṭōb we-ha-heyōt ha-nimṣā'ōt*, « si la bonté et l'être sont les existants », soit parce que des mots auraient manqué au modèle latin (*ita quod et bonitas et ens una ?*), soit par une volonté délibérée de clarification, chez un traducteur qui (Rothschild 2013a, p. 64) se pique peut-être d'écriture humaniste ; Hillel omet le développement (Rothschild 2013b, p. 338-339).

l-ūlā huwiyyatan wa-ḫayran nawʿan wāḥidan (« et comme l'être premier devient être et bonté d'une façon singulière »). Il indique, à l'origine de cette non-conformité, soit une corruption dans le modèle du traducteur, soit l'arrivée accidentelle d'une (ou plusieurs) déformation(s) lors de la transmission de la traduction[97]. Il signale d'ailleurs, en faveur de la seconde alternative, la présence du verbe *fiunt* au lieu de *sunt* dans le manuscrit d'Aoste. L'examen des manuscrits à notre disposition nous a révélé que cette dernière leçon n'est pas seulement attestée dans le manuscrit d'Aoste, mais qu'elle est la plus fréquente. Il faut pourtant noter que le copiste du manuscrit Genève, BGE, Lat. 76, a exponctué *fiunt* et l'a fait suivre immédiatement sur la même ligne par la forme, dite corrigée, *sunt*. Cette dernière leçon est aussi celle retenue par Gilles de Rome[98], et a fonctionné sans doute comme modèle pour les traductions latino-hébraïques[99]. Il est difficile de savoir si *sunt* résulte d'une lecture fautive de *fiunt* (sans doute inspirée par la phrase qui précède où l'on trouve effectivement la formule *sunt una res*), ou s'il faut considérer les deux verbes *sunt* et *fiunt* comme un essai de double traduction du verbe arabe *ṣāra*. Quelle que soit l'option choisie, la traduction latine ne correspond pas directement au texte arabe, mais elle peut être qualifiée de reformulation légèrement interprétative, car elle accentue davantage que ne le fait le texte arabe l'unité foncière entre l'Être premier et la Bonté[100].

(2) En XXIII(XXIV), 179,38-39, la traduction latine lit dans l'édition Pattin : « influens vero existens unum non diversum, influit (…) », tandis que le texte arabe porte : *wa-ammā al-mufīḍ fa-innahu wāḥidun ġayr muḫtalifin yufīḍu* (…)[101], « mais comme celui qui influe est certes un, sans diversité, il influe (…) ». La présence d'*existens* ne s'explique donc pas aisément, comme l'a remarqué Taylor. Les traductions latino-hébraïques ne semblent pas l'avoir eu dans leur modèle, car elles affirment : « Mais celui

97 Taylor 1981, p. 489, note 146.

98 Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 69rX.

99 Rothschild 1994, p. 462, traduisant Juda Romano : « Ainsi, comme l'Existant premier et le Bien sont une seule chose » (*hēm dābār eḥād*, chez Ḥabilio comme chez Juda ; Hillel omet le développement [Rothschild 2013, p. 338-339]).

100 Observons que le manuscrit Vat. Lat. 14717 porte la lecture : *sicut ergo ens primo et bonitas sunt res una*, mais on se demande si la leçon *primo* ne s'est pas produite par attraction avec le mot *ergo* qui précède (dans les deux cas, le « o » étant écrit au-dessus de la ligne).

101 Taylor 1981, p. 241, l. 13-14, mais nous suivons la leçon *al-mufīḍ*, présente dans le manuscrit de Leyde, au lieu de celle de *fayḍ*, que Taylor retient. Contrairement à ce qu'il indique (Taylor 1981, note 13) le latin *influens* n'équivaut pas à la seconde, mais à la première de ses deux lectures.

qui s'épanche est un, sans connaître de diversité, épanchant (…)»[102]. Elles suggèrent la présence d'un *est* à sa place. Selon l'apparat de Pattin, le manuscrit Bruges, Bibliothèque de la Ville 463, porte *sic* au lieu de *vero*[103]. Cette leçon semble recevoir une confirmation assez significative dans le manuscrit de Florence, Ashburnham 1674, car le copiste y a écrit *sit*, mais a exponctué le *t* et l'a corrigé en *c* au-dessus de la ligne. Pourtant, deux autres manuscrits pointent dans une autre direction : le ms Berlin, Staatsbibliothek M 1494, Lat. Qu. 449, où se trouve *sit*, suivi de *existens*, mais où ce dernier mot a été barré ; et le ms Rouen, BM 920, qui porte la leçon *sit vel existens*. Ils suggèrent que le traducteur a hésité sur la manière de rendre l'arabe et a présenté un essai de double traduction. Mais alors, le conditionnel ne convient pas vraiment. Par contre, la leçon *sic* nous paraît intéressante dans la mesure où elle permet de mieux se rapprocher la traduction de l'original arabe. En effet, en ponctuant de la façon suivante : « Influens, sic existens unum non diversificatum, influit (…) », on peut comprendre : « l'influent, qui existe ainsi en tant qu'un, non diversifié, influe… », retrouvant ainsi un sens qui ne s'éloigne pas beaucoup de celui du texte arabe. Mais on trouve encore une dernière variante, qui mérite notre attention, à savoir *influens vero ens unum* (…). Elle est attestée dans le manuscrit Paris, BnF, lat. 16082. À nouveau, en ponctuant *influens vero, ens unum* (…), « mais l'influent, en étant un (…) », ce qui recoupe largement l'arabe. Des recherches sont clairement requises à l'avenir afin de voir dans quelle mesure chacune de ces variantes est représentée dans la tradition manuscrite, voire même de voir si une autre variante ne peut pas se révéler – par exemple *est*. Il ne faut cependant jamais perdre de vue que la lecture de l'édition Pattin a une base solide dans la tradition manuscrite et trouve confirmation dans le commentaire de Gilles de Rome[104].

(3) Enfin, en XXV(XXVI), 188,98-00, on lit chez Pattin : « Si ergo hoc est ita, substantiae stantis per essentiam suam non separatur causa semper » – « S'il en est ainsi, la cause de la substance subsistant en elle-même n'est jamais mise à part »[105]. Mais il est dit en arabe : *fa-in kāna hāḏā hā-kaḏā*

102 Rothschild 1994, p. 470 ; textes hébreux de Juda Romano et de ʿEli Ḥabilio, Rothschild 2013, p. 348-349 : *ha-šōfēaʿ eḥād ašer ēyn bō ḥillūf | ha-maš^{e}pīaʿ eḥād ū-bil^{e}tī mit^{e}ḥallēf*.

103 La même variante est attestée dans les manuscrits de Troyes 1374 et Bordeaux 421.

104 Gilles de Rome, *Expositio super Librum de causis*, 1550, f. 83vV et 84rV.

105 Les traductions française (voir Magnard *et alii* 1990, p. 77), et allemande (voir Fidora, Niederberger 2001, p. 125) contemporaines traduisent *ad sensum* en affirmant que la cause de la substance subsistant en elle-même n'en est jamais séparée, mais nous ne voyons pas comment le génitif *substantie stantis* peut se référer à ce qui fait l'objet de l'action de séparer.

kāna l-ǧawhar al-qā'im bi-ḏātihi lā yufāriqu 'illatahu abadan[106], « S'il en est ainsi, la substance qui subsiste en elle-même ne se sépare jamais de sa cause ». Toutefois, dans son apparat, Pattin indique que le manuscrit Paris, BnF 6318 propose une autre lecture, à savoir : « (…) substantia stans per essentiam suam non separatur a causa », et que celle-ci fut aussi à l'origine celle du manuscrit Vat. lat. 2089, mais qu'on y trouve en marge une correction de *substantia stans* en *substantiae stantis*, ainsi que la suppression de la préposition *a* avant *causa*[107]. Cette dernière correction a de quoi surprendre, car la lecture du manuscrit de Paris, qui est également attestée dans le manuscrit de Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek 1382, correspond parfaitement à l'arabe. En outre, le commentaire d'Albert le Grand, témoigne d'une même lecture tout en apportant quelques modifications mineures : « Si ergo hoc ita est, substantiae stantes per essentiam suam semper ita se habent quod non separantur a sua causa ». Enfin, les manuscrits de Vienne, ÖNB 2491, et Admont, Cod. 405, témoignent eux aussi d'une leçon *substantia stans*, mais le premier ne porte pas la préposition *a* avant *causa*, tandis que dans le dernier la préposition en question est absente sur la ligne et a été ajoutée juste au-dessus[108]. Tout laisse croire, par conséquent, que la traduction originale portait : « (…) *substantia stans per essentiam suam non separatur a causa* », et que, sans doute la préposition *a* a assez rapidement été oubliée par un copiste dans la transmission de la traduction, pour qu' un copiste lise au final *causa* d'une façon assez naturelle comme un nominatif et modifie le nominatif *substantia stans* en génitif. Cette dernière lecture est incontestablement la plus attestée dans la tradition manuscrite. Elle est confirmée par Gilles de Rome et la traduction latino-hébraïque de Juda Romano (mais 'Eli Ḥabilio traduit au contraire : « la substance qui subsiste par elle-même ne se sépare pas de sa cause »), même si la notion de « cause » y est placée directement avant celle de « substance qui subsiste en elle-même »[109].

106 Taylor 1981, p. 250, l. 1-2 [*Bāb* 25, l. 12-13].

107 Pattin 1966, p. 189, notes 98-99. Observons que nous avons constaté la présence (non signalée par Pattin) de la préposition *a* dans le manuscrit du Vat. lat. 2089.

108 Insistons toutefois sur le fait que le verbe *separare* peut se construire seulement avec l'ablatif (Gaffiot 2000, p. 1444). D'autre part, il est intéressant de noter qu'au moins deux manuscrits, qui portent la leçon *substantiae stantis* mentionnent néanmoins la préposition *a* avant *causa*.

109 Respectivement, Gilles de Rome, *Super Librum de causis*, f. 91vX–92rX ; Rothschild 1994, p. 473, traduisant d'après Juda Romano ; Rothschild 2013, p. 353 (Juda Romano : *sibbat ha-'eṣem hā-'ōmēd be-'aṣmō lo' tippārēd* ; 'Eli Ḥabilio : *ha-'eṣem hā-'ōmēd be-'aṣmūtō lo' yippārēd mi-sibbātō*).

7 Traduction latine et témoins indirects arabes

Sachant que le manuscrit le plus ancien connu du texte arabe est postérieur à la traduction latine, celle-ci n'est pas sans valeur pour l'établissement du texte arabe. Ce point a généralement été reconnu dans la recherche contemporaine. Ce qui en a été dit suffit d'ailleurs, et nous n'avons pas à nous en occuper davantage, car ces remarques dépasseraient largement le cadre de la présente recherche. Néanmoins, nous tenons à attirer l'attention sur un élément qui n'a pas encore reçu toute l'attention qu'il méritait, à savoir la confirmation de certaines leçons de la traduction latine par des témoins indirects du texte arabe. En attendant un examen exhaustif, nous nous limitons à signaler quelques cas exemplaires.

La traduction latine dévie à plusieurs reprises du texte arabe tel qu'il a été transmis par le manuscrit de Leyde, mais correspond à des leçons attestées à la fois dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul. Ces dernières sont maintes fois confirmées par les témoins indirects arabes. Il en est ainsi pour la mention de *simplex* en XXVIII(XXIX), 199,52, car le mot arabe qui lui correspond, à savoir *mabsūṭ*, est attesté aussi dans le *Liber de causis* II, ainsi que dans les *Questions siciliennes* et dans le *Budd* d'Ibn Sabʿīn[110]. Dans le dernier ouvrage, nous avons trouvé plusieurs cas semblables, comme par exemple : l'omission de *mumtadd* (VI(VII), 69,86/ p. 215, l. 16) ; *et cum aeternitate* / *wa-maʿa al-dahr* (VI(VII), 71,5/ p. 216, l. 3) ; *virtus* / *quwwa* (IX(X), 94, 18 / p. 201, l. 3) ; *dives* / *al-ġanī* (XX(XXI), 164,54/ p. 133, l. 25) ; omission de *ʿanī* (XX(XXI), 164,59 / p. 134, l. 2) ; *et bonitas eius est res una* / *wa-l-ḫayr šay' wāḥid* (XX(XXI), 164, 60-61 / p. 134, l. 3) ; *apud nos* / *ʿindanā* (XXI(XXII), 168,77 / p. 133, l. 16). Dans un cas, *ergo intelligentia* (XII(XIII), 113,1) est conforme à une leçon *fa-l-ʿaql*, qui est attestée dans le seul manuscrit d'Ankara parmi les trois témoins manuscrits arabes, mais qui est aussi présente dans le *Budd* (p. 52, l. 4). Il est clair pour l'ensemble de ces cas, que le traducteur latin respecte le texte tel qu'il le lit dans son modèle. Il n'est donc pas autorisé, pour ces cas, de modifier le texte de la traduction ni d'y intervenir en supprimant des mots ou en signalant des omissions (supposées). Au cas où il serait patent qu'il n'y a pas accord avec le texte arabe original, il faudra en faire état dans une note spéciale.

Mais il y a aussi des cas où les témoins arabes indirects se montrent particulièrement intéressants en présentant des leçons non attestées dans les manus-

110 *Liber de causis II*, p. 331, l. 10, respectivement Akasoy 2006, p. 406, l. 17 / Spallino 2002, p. 238, l. 8 et Katturah 1978, p. 312, l. 17.

crits arabes du *Liber de causis*, auxquelles la traduction latine correspond pourtant parfaitement. Nous l'illustrerons par trois exemples :

1) proposition XXX(XXXI), 213,66 : *manifestum igitur est quod*. Aucun des trois manuscrits arabes ne permet d'expliquer cette traduction, mais dans les *Fuṣūl* d'al-Amirī se trouve la formule : *fa-qad ẓahara idhan*, à laquelle le latin est pleinement conforme.
2) proposition XXV(XXVI), 188,97 : *et servantem eam*. Cette traduction trouve un support partiel dans le manuscrit de Leyde, qui porte *wa-l-ḥāfiẓa*[111], mais le *Liber de causis II* et le *Budd* expliquent en plus la présence de *eam* en lisant *wa-l-ḥāfiẓa lahu*[112].
3) proposition VIII(IX), 79,47 : *omnis intelligentiae fixio*. Les trois témoins arabes portent *innamā*, « seulement », « ne… que »[113], mais cette expression est absente de la traduction latine ; toutefois, l'absence dans la traduction latine de l'expression « seulement », « solummodo » se justifie sur la base de leçon *inna*, présente dans le *Liber de causis* II[114].

Cette liste n'est sans doute pas exhaustive, mais montre à suffisance que la traduction latine se base parfois sur le témoignage d'une leçon arabe qui n'est pas attestée dans la tradition manuscrite connue du texte, mais uniquement dans ses témoins indirects[115].

Nous aimerions enfin attirer l'attention sur un cas à propos duquel Bardenhewer a essayé de reconstruire, à partir de la traduction latine, une omission qui prend place vers le début du chapitre 23. Il rend *secundum dispositionem* à deux reprises par *ʿalā tartīb*[116]. Se basant sur les manuscrits d'Ankara et Istanbul, Taylor a édité : *ʿalā ḥāla… ʿalā ḥāl*[117]. Cette dernière leçon est plus ou moins confirmée par la *Réfutation* du pseudo-Platon et par le *Liber de causis II*, qui portent : *ʿalā ḥāl… ʿalā ḥāl*[118]. Le terme arabe qui correspond au mot latin *dispositio* est donc *ḥāl*, non pas *tartīb*[119].

111 Taylor 1981, p. 502, note 182.
112 Voir *Liber de causis II*, p. 331, l. 4-5 et Katturah 1978, p. 134, l. 14.
113 Taylor 1981, p. 175, l. 2.
114 *Liber de causis II*, p. 343, l. 13.
115 Ce témoignage de leçons communes entre traduction latine et témoins indirect arabes, sans préjuger de sa valeur exacte, mérite incontestablement une attention sérieuse et détaillée en vue de l'édition critique du texte arabe.
116 Bardenhewer 1882, p. 102, l. 2-3.
117 Taylor 1981, p. 338, l. 3-4.
118 Türker 1965, p. 58, § 2, l. 1-2 / Badawi 1974, p. 338, l. 12-13, respectivement *Liber de causis II*, p. 331, l. 14-15.
119 Nous signalons ce cas parce que la reconstruction hypothétique de Bardenhewer a induit Rothschild en erreur (Rothschild 1994, p. 470, note 1).

8 Traduction latine et le témoignage de la traduction hébraïque de Zeraḥyah

La traduction hébraïque de Zeraḥyah, qui pourrait se baser à la fois sur le texte arabe et la traduction latine[120], constitue clairement un témoin que ni l'éditeur du texte arabe, ni celui de sa traduction latine ne peuvent ignorer, comme il ressort clairement de l'article de 1994 de J.-P. Rothschild. Nous ne pouvons pas ici en évoquer tout le détail, mais nous essayerons à travers quelques cas exemplaires de démontrer son intérêt en vue d'une édition critique tant du texte arabe – du moins quand il est conforme avec le manuscrit de Leyde contre le latin – que de la traduction latine.

Il faut d'abord observer que la traduction de Zeraḥyah peut être conforme à la leçon attestée dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, mais non à celle du manuscrit de Leyde. La même leçon constituait indéniablement la source de la traduction latine. Il en est ainsi en XVIII(XIX), 150,77 pour *corporea* : *ha-garmī* / *al-jirmiyya*[121]. En XIX(XX), 156,1, la présence du mot *essentia* dans la traduction latine – mot auquel rien ne correspond dans le manuscrit de Leyde – n'est pas seulement confirmée par *māhiyya* dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, mais aussi par *mahūt* dans la traduction arabo-hébraïque[122]. D'autre part, il est clair qu'il faut maintenir (avec neuf des dix témoins de l'édition Pattin) dans

120 C'est ce qui ressort du colophon que M. Rothschild nous communique d'après le ms. Londres, (*olim*) Jews' College 42, f. 224 : *zeh mah še-māṣānū kātūb me-ēllū ha-šeʿārīm be-nusḥāʾōt ha-Yišmeʿēlīm we-ha-noṣrīm* (« Voilà ce que nous avons trouvé de ces chapitres dans les versions des Arabes et des Latins »). Zeraḥyah aurait ainsi recouru lui-même à la traduction latine, voire à la traduction latino-hébraïque de Hillel de Vérone, sans doute antérieure à la sienne ; en tout cas les deux hommes se connaissaient (Rothschild 2013, p. 51). Toutefois, M. Rothschild nous a signalé que la question de savoir si ce colophon est de la main du traducteur ou d'un copiste n'a, à sa connaissance, jamais été approfondie depuis Steinschneider et Bardenhewer, le premier favorisant l'hypothèse du traducteur lui-même, le deuxième celle du copiste (Steinschneider 1863, *Hebräische Bibliographie* 6, p. 111 [référence empruntée à Bardenhewer 1882, p. 307, n. 1] ; Bardenhewer 1882, p. 307, n. 1), à moins que Schreiber en ait discuté dans l'introduction (écrite en hongrois) à son édition de la traduction de Zeraḥyah (mais ni M. Rothschild ni nous-même ne connaissons la langue hongroise).

121 Voir Rothschild 1994, p. 460, nº. 7. Rothschild remarque à juste titre que cette notion de « corporel » va dans le même sens que l'affirmation de Proclus, qui figure comme source d'inspiration du passage du *Liber de causis*, voir Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, Proposition 111, p. 98, l. 29 (*somatikai*). Taylor 1981, p. 218, l. 5 [*Bāb* 18, l. 12], a donc à juste titre préféré la leçon *al-jirmiyya*, attestée dans les manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, non celle de *al-ḥayawānī*, présente dans le manuscrit de Leyde.

122 Rothschild 1994, p. 462-463, nº. 1. Signalons toutefois que l'essai de reconstruction dont témoigne Bardenhewer (voir Bardenhewer 1882, p. 95, n. 4) ne s'avère pas entièrement

la traduction latine, XXIII(XXIV), 180,55, les mots *esse et*, après *Et non intelligo per esse nisi*, sur base, une fois de plus, du témoignage commun des manuscrits arabes d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, d'une part, et de la traduction de Zeraḥyah, d'autre part[123].

Un contre-exemple existe cependant, dans lequel Zeraḥyah paraît au moins en partie confirmer Leyde contre Ankara / Istanbul : là où en XVIII(XIX), 154,95, le latin, en pleine conformité avec la leçon du seul mot *al-ṣūra* des manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, porte *formam* (*secundum hanc formam*), Zeraḥyah utilise comme Leyde deux expressions : *u-be-zeh ha-to'ar* (*yiheyū ha-madregōt ha-śikhliyōt*) *u-be-zeh ha-qiyyūm*[124].

Autre configuration encore des rapports entre les témoins : les mots *et sui complimenti* sont sans doute, en accord avec la vaste majorité des manuscrits latins, à supprimer dans la traduction latine, XXIV(XXV), 184,74-75, car rien n'y correspond dans les trois témoins arabes ni dans la traduction de Zeraḥyah[125].

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correct, car il a rendu le terme *essentia* par *ǧawhar*, ce qui correspond davantage à une lecture du latin *substantia*.

123 Voir respectivement, Taylor 1981, p. 500, n. 179 ; Rothschild 1994, p. 471, nº. 6).

124 Taylor 1981, p. 220, l. 4-5 [*Bāb* 18, l. 23], a opté pour la leçon *wa-ʿalā hāḏā l-ṣifa* (…) *wa-bi-hāḏā al-qiyās*, présente dans le manuscrit de Leyde, et cela malgré l'accord entre la traduction latine et la leçon des manuscrits d'Ankara et d'Istanbul. Toutefois, son choix trouve un support (du moins, partiel) supplémentaire dans la traduction hébraïque de Zeraḥyah, au moins pour l'addition à la fin des mots *wa-bi-hāḏā al-qiyās*. En effet, l'expression *u-be-zeh ha-qiyyūm* confirme – moyennant l'hypothèse de Rothschild [Rothschild 1994, p. 461-462, nº 13] d'une possible lecture fautive du *s* final de *qiyās* comme un *m* – la présence de ces mots dans le modèle du traducteur. Quant à l'autre expression, *u-be-zeh ha-to'ar*, elle peut résulter aussi bien d'une leçon *wa-ʿalā hāḏā l-ṣifa que wa-ʿalā hāḏā l-ṣūra*, car le terme *to'ar* couvre en philosophie médiévale un spectre sémantique très large (« attribut » ; « description, propriété » ; « forme » ; Klatzkin 1933, t. IV, p. 172-176). L'affirmation de Rothschild (ibid.) selon laquelle la traduction *to'ar* est « conforme au latin » (*forma*), est peut-être discutable dans la mesure où le sens primaire de ce mot, à savoir « attribut », correspond davantage à *ṣifa* qu'à *ṣūra*. Certes, rien n'exclut que *to'ar* constitue la traduction de *ṣūra*, mais il me semble qu'il soit impossible dans ce contexte de fixer avec certitude le terme arabe sous-jacent. Dans ce cas la traduction de Zeraḥyah ne permet donc pas de fixer avec certitude le texte arabe présent dans son modèle. Reste néanmoins la difficulté de déterminer le rapport précis avec le texte grec de Proclus (*Prop.* III, p. 98, l. 31-32). Tout laisse croire que l'auteur du texte arabe du *Liber de causis* a lu *outoos* au lieu de *outos*. L'option de Taylor ne peut pas simplement être écartée, mais nécessite sans doute un examen approfondi entre le texte arabe et le texte grec de Proclus, qui en constitue la source d'inspiration.

125 Voir Rothschild 1994, p. 472, nº. 3. Taylor (Taylor 1981, p. 247, l. 1 [*Bāb* 24, l. 11]) de façon un peu surprenante, préfère par contre d'ajouter dans le texte arabe, sur la base de la traduction latine, telle que Pattin l'a éditée (mais sans tenir compte du fait que cette lecture est basée sur une minorité infime de ses témoins), *wa-tamāmuhu*.

Enfin, nous souhaitons attirer tout particulièrement l'attention sur deux cas :

En V(VI), 58,28-30, la traduction latine rend « quod est quoniam causa prima non cessat illuminare causatum suum et ipsa non illuminatur a lumine alio », alors que les trois témoins arabes portent : *wa-ḏālika anna al-ʿilla allatī tunīru awwalan tunīru maʿlūlahā wa-hiya lā tastanīru min nūrin āḫarin* (« En effet, la cause, qui illumine de façon primordiale, illumine ce qu'elle a causé, alors qu'elle n'est pas illuminée par une autre lumière »)[126]. La traduction de Zeraḥyah, qui porte : *we-zeh kī ha-illāh ha-riʾšōnāh ʿōśāh ba-ʿālūlāh we-hēm ēynām ʿōśīm bāh* (« c'est que la cause première agit dans son causé et eux (*sic*) n'agissent pas en elle »[127]) a en commun avec le latin l'expression « première cause ». Cette concordance peut difficilement être le fruit du hasard. Elle pourrait indiquer l'existence d'un modèle commun aux deux traductions, qui offrait une autre lecture de l'arabe. L'épitomé de ʿAbd al-Lāṭif al-Baġdādī est un témoin incontestable pour la confirmation de cette correspondance, car on y lit : *li-anna al-ʿilla al-ūlā tunīru kulla ʿillatin wa-maʿlūlin wa-hiya lā tastanīru min nūrin āḫarin* (« Car la cause première illumine chaque cause et chaque causé, alors qu'elle n'est pas illuminée par une autre lumière »[128]). On y trouve clairement exprimé que c'est la cause première qui illumine, mais on y cherche en vain l'équivalent de l'idée selon laquelle cette illumination est sans interruption – idée, par ailleurs, aussi absente de la traduction de Zeraḥyah[129]. Étant donné qu'al-Baġdādī mentionne une illumination de l'ensemble des causes et des choses causés (en reformulant ainsi, et en toute probabilité, d'une façon personnelle l'expression *maʿlūlahā*, « ce qu'elle a causé »), il n'est la source directe ni de la traduction latine ni de celle de Zeraḥyah. Cependant, cela ne rend pas impossible l'existence d'une source commune arabe, qui aurait été connue du traducteur latin et de Zeraḥyah (même si ce dernier exprime en termes d'« agir » ce que le latin, en conformité avec tous les témoins arabes, présente en termes d'« illuminer »). En effet, il suffit de supposer que cette source recelait une formulation très similaire à celle d'al-Baġdādī, tout en conservant, avec tous les témoins majeurs, la leçon *maʿlūlahā.* On ne peut certes pas exclure que Zeraḥyah se soit appuyé directement sur le latin. La question qui se poserait alors serait celle de savoir pourquoi il a délaissé l'idée de 'permanence' qui qualifie, dans la version latine, l'activité (illuminatrice) divine.

126 Taylor 1981, p. 160, l. 6-161, l. 1 [*Bāb* 5, l. 6-7].

127 Rothschild 1994, p. 427, nº. 3.

128 Badawi 1955, p. 249, l. 4.

129 Taylor (Taylor 1981, p. 451, n. 41) suggère l'existence de l'affirmation suivante dans le modèle du traducteur latin : (*wa-ḏālika anna*) *al-ʿilla al-ūlā lā tuzālu tunīru maʿlūlahā.*

En VIII (IX), 84,75, le latin *et horizontem naturae* est confirmé par la traduction de Zeraḥyah, qui a *be-ōfan* (ou : *be-ofeq*, de même sens) *ha-ṭeba'* (l'horizon de la nature)[130], mais ne correspond nullement à la lecture des témoins arabes, qui portent invariablement *wa-mā fawqu al-ṭabīʿa* (« au-dessus de la nature »[131]). Cette dernière leçon semble être confirmée par un des témoins indirects arabes, à savoir le *Liber de causis* II, où manque toutefois, immédiatement après, la formule assez redondante : *fa-innahā fawqu al-ṭabīʿa* (« car elle est au-dessus de la nature »)[132]. Comme Taylor et Rothschild le supposent, la variante *wa-ufuq al-ṭabīʿa* figurait sans doute dans le modèle utilisé tant par Gérard de Crémone que par Zeraḥyah[133]. À l'appui d'une telle lecture on pourrait évoquer l'affirmation en II, 22, 81-82 que l'âme *est in horizonte aeternitatis inferius*, mais seul un examen approfondi du passage pourrait révéler la plausibilité de cette hypothèse[134]. Quoi qu'il en soit, la traduction hébraïque de Zeraḥyah montre qu'on n'a certainement pas le droit d'intervenir dans le texte de la traduction latine, et cela d'autant plus qu'on ne peut pas totalement exclure que Zeraḥyah ait eu recours – fût-ce de façon partielle – à la traduction latine. Le véritable enjeu est de savoir si sa leçon « horizon de la nature » est basée sur une lecture fautive ou, tout au contraire, correcte de l'arabe.

9 Conclusion

Malgré les œuvres pionnières, et extrêmement méritoires, de Bardenhewer, Pattin, Vansteenkiste et, en dernier lieu, Taylor, il reste un long travail à accomplir avant que l'on puisse songer à élaborer une véritable édition critique de la traduction latine, qui par ailleurs restera incontestablement très dépendante d'une véritable édition critique du texte arabe. Dans ce qui précède, nous avons essayé de dresser un petit tableau de quelques défis majeurs et de clarifier quelques problèmes particuliers. Ce survol est loin d'être exhaustif. En effet, nous nous sommes souvent limités à l'examen de quelques cas exemplaires. Mais nous n'avons pas prêté attention aux deux cas de translittération, à savoir des mots arabes *ʿaql* et *ḥilya*, chacun transcrit sous une multitude de formes,

130 Rothschild 1994, p. 439, nº. 8.
131 Taylor 1981, p. 177, l. 5 [*Bāb* 8, l. 19].
132 *Liber de causis II*, p. 346, l. 4-5.
133 Respectivement Taylor 1981, p. 460, n. 70 ; Rothschild 1994, p. 439, nº. 8.
134 La notion d'« horizon » dans ce contexte n'est pas inspirée de Proclus, mais plutôt dérivée de Plotin ; cf. D'Ancona 2014, p. 144, n. 44.

attestées parfois dans le même manuscrit[135]. Nous n'avons pas discuté non plus des quelques cas où seule une analyse approfondie pourrait éclairer ce qui à première vue constitue une non-conformité entre le texte arabe et la traduction latine[136]. Nous espérons néanmoins avoir démontré la complexité de la tâche qu'il reste à accomplir : d'une part, fixer aussi bien que possible la traduction latine originale telle qu'elle figurait dans l'archétype ; d'autre part, identifier la formulation de cette traduction telle qu'elle était accessible, à un moment précis et dans un lieu donné, à ses lecteurs.

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135 L'analyse de ses différentes formes pourra sans doute contribuer à l'établissement du *stemma codicum*.

136 Il va de soi qu'il y faut ajouter l'étude du lexique utilisé. L'importance de celle-ci s'illustre très bien à partir de l'utilisation de l'adverbe *simul* en XXII (XXIII), 175, 14 : *simul omnes res*, là où le texte arabe porte dans ses trois témoins : *ǧamīʿ al-ašyāʾ kulluhā*. À partir de la traduction latine, Taylor (Taylor 1981, p. 238, l. 2 [*Bāb* 22, l. 17]) a corrigé le texte arabe en *ǧamīʿ al-ašyāʾ maʿan*. Mais une telle correction ne s'impose nullement si on tient compte du fait que *simul* traduit à plusieurs reprises *ǧamīʿan* dans le *De anima* de l'Avicenne latin (Avicenna latinus 1972, p. 303, n°. 123 et 1968, p. 223, n°. 108). Il est vrai que dans ce dernier, l'arabe porte l'adverbe, mais le traducteur latin du *Liber de causis* peut avoir opté pour l'utilisation de la forme adverbiale pour rendre le substantif *ǧamīʿ*, dans un contexte où apparaît immédiatement après la notion de *tout*(*es*).

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CHAPTER 14

Les mots arabes du *Liber de causis* dans le commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin

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La présente contribution se propose de suivre la piste, dans le commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin au *Liber de causis*, ainsi que dans le reste de son œuvre, de deux termes arabes, translittérés dans le texte latin du *Liber de causis* : *achili* (Proposition IV § 43) ou *alachili* (Proposition (V) § 52 et Proposition XI(XII) § 105) et *yliathim* (Proposition VIII(IX) § 90)[1].

Au temps où le P. Saffrey écrivait son article sur « l'état actuel des recherches sur le *Liber de causis* » (1963), les mots arabes restés dans le texte latin plaidaient contre l'hypothèse, encore défendue par certains, d'une origine occidentale, tolédane, du *Liber de causis*[2]. Dans cette hypothèse en effet, on ne s'expliquait pas bien la rémanence de ces mots arabes translittérés dans le latin. Cristina d'Ancona, dans son récent article sur le *Liber de causis*, rappelle avec raison que ces mots arabes, restés dans le texte latin de Gérard de Crémone, ont de tout temps donné aux lecteurs latins une clé concernant l'origine du texte[3].

La question dont traite la présente contribution déplace toutefois l'objet de la recherche. On s'intéresse cette fois à ces mots arabes pour remonter au texte du *Liber de causis* que Thomas d'Aquin pouvait avoir à sa disposition. Il s'agit donc de chercher quel texte avait sous les yeux Thomas d'Aquin

1 Je remercie Dragos Calma de m'avoir proposé ce sujet d'enquête, ainsi qu'Adriano Oliva, qui a bien voulu me donner accès à la filmothèque et à la bibliothèque de la Commission léonine à Paris.

2 Saffrey 1963, lui-même plutôt favorable à l'hypothèse d'une origine bagdadienne, résume, p. 272, l'hypothèse « latiniste » selon laquelle le traducteur et philosophe juif Ibn Daud, Avendauth, aurait compilé en arabe les *Eléments* de Proclus, qu'il lisait en grec à Tolède, alors même que Gérard de Crémone y était présent et traduisait le *Liber de causis* en latin. Avant Endress 1973, l'attribution du *Liber* au cercle bagdadien d'al-Kindī est soutenue par Bardenhewer 1882, Kraus 1940-1941, d'Alverny 1954, Anawati 1974 (cf. également Saffrey 1963, p. 269). Sur la progressive prise de conscience au XX^e^ siècle des liens du *Liber* avec les autres branches du néoplatonisme arabe, il faut se reporter à D'Ancona 1995 et 2014. Selon D'Ancona 1995, al-Kindī est l'auteur tant du remaniement arabe de Plotin (*Théologie d'Aristote*, qui ne fut traduite en latin qu'en 1519) que de celui de Proclus (*Liber de causis*).

3 D'Ancona 2014, p. 138, n. 2.

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et de prendre appui sur les mots arabes restés dans le latin, comme sur des indices, pour s'orienter.

Après avoir précisé le sens de ces mots, on s'intéressera aux éditions disponibles du *Liber de causis* et du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin à ce livre, pour ensuite présenter le résultat de quelques enquêtes ponctuelles faites dans les manuscrits.

1 Les mots

1.1 *Achili*

Le mot *achili* [§ 43] ou *alachili* [§§ 52, 105] vient de « AQL, pluriel ʿuqūl, intelligence, à tous les sens de ce mot désignant soit la faculté intellectuelle, soit un être immatériel »[4]. Ses équivalents latins sont *intellectus, intelligentia*. Le texte latin du *Liber de causis*, Propositions IV, (V) et XII(XI) donne ainsi l'équivalence : *alachili id est intelligentia*).

Achili / alachili apparaissent dans les lemmes suivants du *Liber de causis* :

> Proposition IV § 43 (éd. Pattin, p. 55) : et omne quod ex eo sequitur causam primam est *achili* id est intelligentia. Traduction : et tout ce qui suit la Cause Première par lui ⟨l'être⟩, est *achili* c'est-à-dire *intelligence*[5].
>
> Proposition (V) § 52 (éd. Pattin, p. 57) : animae igitur quae sequuntur *alachili* id est intelligentiam. Traduction : donc les âmes qui jouxtent *al achili*, c'est-à-dire l'intelligence.
>
> Proposition XI(XII) § 105 (éd. Pattin, p. 105) : verumtamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae *alachili*, id est intelligentiae. Traduction : pourtant, l'être et la vie dans l'intelligence sont deux *al achili*, c'est-à-dire des intelligences.

1.2 *Yliathim*

Le sens de *Yliathim*, qui se rencontre avec différentes graphies qui seront examinées dans la dernière partie de cette contribution, a fait l'objet d'erreurs d'interprétation. *Yliathim* ne veut en effet pas dire « universalité »[6] et ne vient

4 Goichon 1938, p. 225-233, n. 439. Voir la discussion *d'achili* dans Calma (2021).

5 Sur la Proposition IV du *Liber de causis* voir Porro 2014, p. 264-298.

6 Cf. *Liber de causis*, p. 69, note h : « yliathim = universalité » ; Taylor 1979, p. 510 n. 2, explique

pas non plus du grec *hylè* contrairement à ce que pensaient Thomas d'Aquin et Albert le Grand[7]. *Yliatim* est la traduction arabe du grec *morphè* (latin *forma*, forme)[8]. R. Taylor explique que *helyatin* transcrit *hilyatin*, génitif singulier indéfini de *hilyah* et souligne la fidélité de la traduction latine à l'arabe[9]. C. D'Ancona précise que l'arabe *hilya*, traduit le grec *morphè*, forme, et que dans la proposition VIII(IX) du *Liber de causis*, il est dit que la Cause Première n'a pas de *morphè*[10].

1.2.1 *Yliathim* dans le *Liber de causis*

Il y a six occurrences d'*yliathim* dans le *Liber de causis* :

> Proposition VIII (IX) §§ 90-91 (p. 69-70) : Et intelligentia est habens *yliathim* quoniam est esse et forma et similiter anima est habens *yliathim* et natura est habens *yliathim*. Et causae quidem primae non est *yliathim* quoniam ipsa est esse tantum. Quod si dixerit aliquis : necesse est ut sit *yliathim*, dicemus : *yliathim* suum est infinitum et individuum suum est bonitas pura, influens super intelligentiam omnes bonitates et super reliquas res mediante intelligentia.

Ce qui se traduit :

> Et l'intelligence possède *l'yliathim* [la forme], puisqu'elle est être et forme. Et semblablement l'âme possède *l'yliathim* [la forme]. Et la nature détient *l'yliathim* [la forme]. Et, pour sûr, la Cause Première n'a pas *d'yliathim* [la forme], puisqu'elle est seulement être. Et si quelqu'un disait qu'il

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que Bardenhewer 1882 a lu *kulliyah* au lieu de *hilyah*, « les deux mots ne différant que par la première lettre en arabe » ; id., ibid., p. 510, n. 23 : la leçon correcte *hilyah* est due à Rosenthal 1952, suivi par Anawati 1956, sur la base de l'évidence du texte latin et du fait que *kulliyah* n'a pas de sens dans ce contexte ; Serra 1975 a le premier repéré dans le manuscrit Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit Golius 209, la leçon originale *hilyah*, sous la correction *kullyah* portée par une deuxième main.

7 Cf. Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis*, p. 64 : « yliatim dicitur ab yle » ; Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, c. 18, p. 111 : « et propter hoc a quibusdam philosophis hyliatin vocatur, quod denominativum est ab hyle ».

8 Cf. Taylor 1979, p. 510 ; D'Ancona 2014, p. 151.

9 Taylor 1979, p. 510 n. 21 : « The Arabic word transliterated *hilyah* [...] can be translated as 'ornament', 'attribute', 'quality', 'state', 'condition', 'appearance' and even 'form'. Furthermore, the work of Franz Rosenthal on the Arabic Plotinus source has shown that *ilyah*, although uncommon in philosophical texts, has been used to render the Greek *morphè*, 'shape' or 'form' ».

10 D'Ancona 2014, p. 151.

> est nécessaire qu'elle soit [ait une] *yliathim* [forme], nous dirons que son *yliathim* [sa forme] est infinie et que son individu est la bonté pure répandant sur l'intelligence toutes ses bontés et [les répandant] sur les autres choses par la médiation de l'intelligence.

Cette proposition VIII(IX) du *Liber de causis* a fait l'objet de discussions parmi les spécialistes, qui s'accordent pour dire qu'elle n'a probablement pas une source proclusienne[11]. C. D'Ancona souligne que la thèse selon laquelle la Cause Première n'a pas de *morphè* correspond à une théorie plotinienne[12]. Le Premier Principe, qui est au-delà de toute forme, ne peut pas être connu : c'est l'Un *amorphon kai aneideon*. Proclus n'aurait jamais concédé que l'Intellect soit l'image première et la plus révélante de l'Un. Pourtant, cette thèse est présente dans le *Liber de causis*.

Ceci dit, l'auteur du *Liber de causis* introduit un changement par rapport à Plotin : la raison pour laquelle la Cause Première est au-delà de toute forme est qu'il est être pur (*quoniam ipsa est esse tantum*)[13]. Cette doctrine viendrait selon les uns de Porphyre[14], selon les autres, des *Noms divins* du Pseudo-Denys[15]. Richard Taylor résume ainsi la thèse soutenue par le *Liber de causis* : « tous les êtres créés sont des entités limitées par la forme. L'intelligence est limitée à cause de son être et de sa forme ; de même, l'âme et la nature sont limitées, car chacune a un être qui est limité, spécifié et rendu fini par sa forme »[16].

1.2.2 *Yliathim* chez Thomas d'Aquin

Hyliathim : ce mot a paru aux lecteurs latins être connecté au grec *hylè*. Thomas d'Aquin n'est pas à l'origine de cette étymologie, dont il faudrait faire l'archéologie et qui est déjà présente au moins chez Albert le Grand.

Thomas d'Aquin écrit, en commentant la proposition VIII(IX) :

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11 Voir cependant la contribution d'Elvira Wakelnig au présent volume, selon qui on ne peut établir qu'*yliathim* ne puisse provenir des traductions arabes de Proclus.

12 D'Ancona 2014, p. 151.

13 D'Ancona 2014, p. 151.

14 Thillet 1971 ; Pinès 1971.

15 D'Ancona 2014.

16 Taylor 1979, p. 512 : « The [...] author of the *De causis* [...] is stressing that all created beings are entities limited by form. The intelligence is limited because it is being and form ; and so too are soul and nature, for each has being which is limited, specified and made finite by form ».

> Nam intelligentia habet *yliatim* id est aliquid materiale vel ad modum materiae se habens ; dicitur enim *yliatim* ab *yle* quod est materia. Et quodomo hoc sit exponit subdens : *Quoniam est esse et forma*. Quidditas enim et substantia ipsius intelligentiae est quaedam forma subsistens immaterialis sed quia ipsa non est suum esse sed est subsistens in esse participato comparatur ipsa forma subsistens ad esse participatum sicut potentia ad actum aut materia ad formam[17].

Ce qui se traduit :

> Car l'intelligence a un *yliatim*, c'est-à-dire quelque chose de matériel ou se comportant à la manière de la matière ; en effet *yliatim* est dit à partir de *yle* qui est la matière. Et il explique comment cela est en ajoutant : parce qu'elle est être et forme. En effet la quiddité et la substance de l'intelligence elle-même est une certaine forme subsistante immatérielle mais parce qu'elle-même n'est pas son être mais est subsistante dans l'être participé, la forme subsistante elle-même est comparée à l'être participé comme la puissance à l'acte ou la matière à la forme.

Pour Thomas, le *Liber de causis* épouserait la doctrine de la composition hylémorphique des intelligences ou substances séparées[18]. Selon lui, cet ouvrage soutiendrait que « l'intelligence a une matière », *intelligentia est habens yliatim*. Thomas d'Aquin fait donc du *Liber de causis* un livre qui cite la doctrine de l'hylémorphisme universel. Toutefois, pour Thomas, la façon dont l'intelligence possède une *yliatim*, un principe matériel, c'est en tant qu'elle est « être et forme », car Thomas défend dans toute son oeuvre que l'intelligence ou substance séparée est complètement dénuée de toute composition avec la matière[19].

Thomas cite-t-il *yliathim* ailleurs dans son œuvre ? *Hulè* figure dans l'*Index thomisticus* du P. Busa, qui y a adjoint *yliathim*. Thomas emploie *hulè* en quatre

17 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 64, l. 6-19.

18 Taylor 1979, p. 506-513. Voir la contribution de Michael Chase dans le présent volume.

19 Taylor 1979, p. 509-510 : « For him the notion that all beings except God are composed of matter and form was a philosophically unsound teaching inspired by Ibn Gabirol's *Fons vitae*. Even St. Bonaventure's position that angels are composed of form and spiritual matter he regarded as untenable. For St. Thomas hylomorphic composition is found only among sensible entities which have their existence in this composition of matter and form ».

lieux supplémentaires, associé aux noms de David de Dinant et d'Alexandre d'Aphrodise :

> *Scriptum super Sententiis*, lib. 2, d. 17, q. 1, a. 1 : David de Dinando divisit enim res in partes tres, in corpora, animas, et substantias aeternas separatas ; et primum indivisibile, ex quo constituuntur corpora, dixit *yle* ; primum autem indivisibile, ex quo constituuntur animae, dixit *noym*, vel mentem ; primum autem indivisibile in substantiis aeternis dixit Deum ; et haec tria esse unum et idem : ex quo iterum consequitur esse omnia per essentiam unum.
>
> *Quaestiones disputatae de anima*, a. 6, arg. 11 : Praeterea, Alexander dicit in libro de intellectu, quod anima habet intellectum *ylealem*. *Yle* autem dicitur prima materia. Ergo in anima est aliquid de prima materia.
>
> *De principiis naturae*, cap. 2 : Ipsa autem materia quae intelligitur sine qualibet forma et privatione, sed subiecta formae et privationi, dicitur materia prima, propter hoc quod ante ipsam non est alia materia. Et hoc etiam dicitur *yle*.
>
> *In De generatione*, lib. 1, l. 10, n. 9. Deinde cum dicit : *est autem hyle* etc. comparat praedictas transmutationes secundum subiectum quod est tantum ens in potentia. Et dicit quod *hyle*, sive materia prima, est maxime proprium subiectum susceptibile generationis et corruptionis

2 Les éditions

2.1 *L'édition du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin au* Liber de causis *(Saffrey 1954)*

Le commentaire au *Liber de causis* de Thomas d'Aquin a été édité par le P. Saffrey en 1954. Le *stemma codicum* décrit une double tradition : universitaire d'après les deux *exemplaria* simultanés de l'université de Paris et dont les manuscrits sont indépendants les uns des autres ; et indépendante (des *exemplaria* parisiens). Un ancêtre X commun à ces deux traditions, très proche de l'apographe dicté par Thomas, « devait se trouver en Italie, peut-être à la curie pontificale ou dans un centre dominicain »[20]. D'après le P. Saffrey, l'apographe

20 Saffrey dans Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. LVIII.

a été dicté par Thomas à l'un de ses secrétaires. Ses fautes prouvent son unicité. Il ne donna lieu qu'à une seule rédaction et ne portait aucune correction d'auteur. On doit peut-être en conclure que toute remarque sur la mise en page du commentaire dans les manuscrits ou sur sa version écrite remonte avec difficulté à Thomas lui-même. Le P. Saffrey lui-même ne fait aucune remarque sur la mise en page des manuscrits.

L'édition Saffrey a été faite sur cinq manuscrits de la famille indépendante, huit de la famille universitaire auxquels s'ajoutent deux manuscrits supplémentaires pour la première *pecia* seulement. Dix manuscrits ont été en outre consultés (deux de la branche indépendante et huit de la branche universitaire). Soit en tout vingt-cinq manuscrits. Le P. Saffrey mentionne en introduction cinquante manuscrits et la liste de la Commission léonine en comporte cinquante-cinq, plus sept fragments.

Le texte du *Liber de causis* commenté par Thomas est différent du texte imprimé avant le commentaire de Thomas par le P. Saffrey. En ce qui concerne le texte imprimé avant le commentaire de Thomas, le P. Saffrey affirme :

> J'ai imprimé un texte du *Liber de causis* qui suit celui de Bardenhewer sauf chaque fois que saint Thomas, citant le *Liber*, présente un autre texte. J'ai soigneusement noté dans l'apparat critique à l'endroit de ces citations les divergences. Autrement dit, je me suis appliqué à reconstituer, chaque fois que c'est possible, le manuscrit que saint Thomas avait sous les yeux[21].

En pratique, toutefois, les choses paraissent moins claires. Par exemple, p. 36, Proposition V : Thomas omet dans son lemme quatre mots, ce que signale le P. Saffrey en marge inférieure avec une *. Mais il reproduit quand même en tête du commentaire (p. 35) le texte complet, sans rien indiquer.

2.2 *Les éditions du Liber de causis* (*Bardenhewer, Pattin*)

L'édition Bardenhewer du *Liber de causis*, que reprend le P. Saffrey, repose sur deux manuscrits de Munich : Clm 162 (XIV^e^ siècle) et 527 (XIII^e^ siècle). Elle est remplacée par l'édition Pattin du *Liber de causis*, qui est postérieure à l'édition Saffrey du commentaire de Thomas à ce livre. L'édition Pattin donne des indications sur la tradition manuscrite du *Liber de causis* qu'il faut prendre en considération dans nos tentatives d'approcher le texte que Thomas avait sous les yeux.

21 Saffrey dans Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. LXXIII.

A. Pattin décrit quatre-vingt-douze manuscrits, en collationne entièrement dix. Il se réfère de plus aux éditions Bardenhewer et Saffrey, à l'édition du commentaire de Roger Bacon par Steele[22], aux commentaires d'Albert le Grand (éd. Venise, 1517) et de Gilles de Rome (éd. Venise, 1550). Il affirme : « De plus nous avons largement consulté plus de quatre-vingts manuscrits dont nous ne donnons cependant que les variantes les plus significatives pour l'établissement de notre texte »[23].

3 Les manuscrits

Après avoir défini les emplois et le sens d'*achili* et d'*yliathim* dans le *Liber de causis* et décrit les éditions dont nous disposons pour le *Liber de causis* et le commentaire de saint Thomas d'Aquin, nous présentons ici le résultat de quelques enquêtes que nous avons effectuées dans les manuscrits du commentaire de Thomas et du *Liber de causis* dans le but d'approcher le texte de cet ouvrage que Thomas pouvait avoir sous les yeux.

3.1 *Thomas d'Aquin et le* Liber de causis

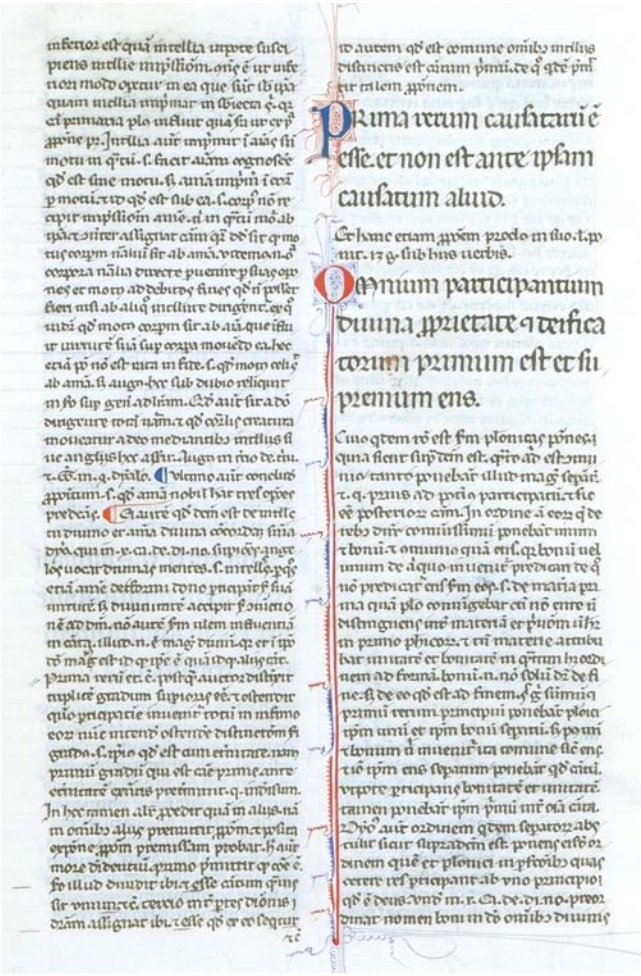
Thomas ne cite pas intégralement le texte du *Liber de causis* avant de le commenter. Il cite seulement les premiers mots de la proposition suivis d'un « etc. », puis il cite le *Liber de causis* au fur et à mesure de son commentaire. Par conséquent, l'impression par le P. Saffrey du texte du *Liber de causis* avant le commentaire par Thomas pour chaque proposition restitue un texte du *Liber de causis* à partir de l'édition critique de Bardenhewer « corrigée » par les citations qu'en fait Thomas au fil de son commentaire. Cette correction, selon Saffrey, est toujours soigneusement signalée. Or, comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, ce n'est pas vraiment le cas.

Thomas a conscience de l'existence de deux traditions manuscrites, l'une à trente-deux propositions, l'autre à trente et une propositions[24]. L'une collige les propositions IV et V (tradition à 31 propositions) ; l'autre les distingue (tradition à 32 propositions). Les manuscrits à trente et une propositions forment 39 % des quatre-vingt-douze manuscrits décrits par Pattin, soit trente-six manuscrits et un à trente propositions.

22 Robert Steele utilise deux manuscrits du XIII^e^ siècle du British Library, Reg. 12 D XIV et 12 F I. Cf. Roger Bacon, *Quaestiones super Librum de causis*.

23 *Liber de causis*, p. 130.

24 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 31 : *et hoc in sequenti propositione quae in quibusdam libris invenitur coniuncta* [*iuncta, inventa*] *cum isto commento, et incipit : 'intelligentiae superiores et cetera'*.



ILL. 14.1 Toledo, Bibl. Capitular 47.12, f. 79r, Proposition IV: *Prima rerum creatarum est esse*

Note: Ce manuscrit est peut-être le plus ancien manuscrit de la tradition indépendante. Il appartient à une collection presque complète des ouvrages traduits du grec par Guillaume de Moerbeke, copiée en Italie par un clerc de Bayonne autour de 1279, qui reproduit peut-être les propres manuscrits de Moerbeke.

Il est bien connu que Thomas a conscience que l'auteur de ce livre est arabe et puise à *l'Elementatio theologica* de Proclus qui venait d'être traduite par Guillaume de Moerbeke (1268)[25] :

> Inveniuntur igitur quaedam de primis principiis conscripta, per diversas propositiones distincta, quasi per modum sigillatim considerantium aliquas veritates. Et in Graeco quidem invenitur sic traditus liber Procli Platonici, continens CCXI propositiones, qui intitulatur elementatio theologica ; in Arabico vero invenitur hic liber qui apud Latinos *de causis* dicitur, quem constat de Arabico esse translatum et in Graeco penitus non haberi : unde videtur ab aliquo philosophorum Arabum ex praedicto libro Procli excerptus, praesertim quia omnia quae in hoc libro continentur, multo plenius et diffusius continentur in illo[26].

L'entreprise de Thomas consiste même dans une certaine mesure à substituer au texte du *Liber de causis* le texte de Proclus. Dans certains manuscrits, surtout ceux de la tradition indépendante, cela se voit dans la mise en page : les trois premiers mots de la proposition du *Liber de causis* suivis de « etc. », sont suivis de la *divisio textus* du *Liber de causis* avec la citation de la proposition du *Liber de causis* en grands caractères ; puis viennent les citations des propositions correspondantes de Proclus, en grands caractères, nettement mises en évidence. Tout se passe comme si la typographie voulait suggérer que le texte commenté est celui de Proclus. Toutefois, si l'on se souvient que Thomas a dicté son commentaire, la mise en page de son commentaire dans ce type de manuscrits relèverait d'un autre projet.

3.2 *Première enquête : L'absence d'***achili/alachili** *dans les manuscrits de Thomas d'Aquin*

Dans une première enquête, j'ai cherché à vérifier que les manuscrits de Thomas ne comportent pas *achili / alachili*.

J'ai effectué des vérifications sur les passages suivants :

Liber de causis, Proposition IV :

> *et omne quod ex eo sequitur causam primam est achili id est intelligentia*
> SAFFREY, p. 26

25 Cf. Steel 2014, p. 247-263.
26 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, pr., p. 3, l. 1-10.

> *quia omne quod ex eo sequitur causam primam est achili id est intelligentia*
>
> BARDENHEWER, p. 167, l. 4-6

> *quia omne quod ex eo sequitur causam primam est achili* [*id est*] *intelligentia.*
>
> PATTIN, p. 55, l. 54-55

> Thomas d'Aquin, *Super librum de causis*, Proposition IV, *divisio textus* : differentiam assignat ibi : *Et omne**[27] *quod ex eo sequitur*, etc.
>
> SAFFREY, p. 27, l. 6-7

> Thomas d'Aquin, *Super librum de causis*, Proposition IV, *divisio textus* : Deinde cum dicit : *et omne quod ex eo sequitur etc.*, ostendit differentiam inter membra divisionis.
>
> SAFFREY, p. 31, l. 1-2

Thomas d'Aquin, *Super librum de causis*, Proposition IV, commentaire (Thomas paraphrase *intelligentia* [*achili*] par *illud esse intellectuale*) :

> hanc differentiam ponit quantum ad intelligentiarum naturam, quod illud esse intellectuale *quod* immediate *assequitur causam primam, est intelligentia completa ultima* completione quantum ad esse creatum *in potentia* essendi et in *reliquis bonitatibus* consequentibus, illud vero esse intellectuale *quod est inferius* in ordine intelligentiarum, retinet quidem naturam et rationem *intelligentiae*, sed *tamen est sub* superiori *intelligentia in complemento* naturae et in *virtute* essendi et operandi et in omnibus *bonitatibus* sive perfectionibus.
>
> SAFFREY, p. 32, l. 9-17

Liber de causis, Proposition V :

> *animae igitur quae sequuntur*[28] *intelligentiam*
>
> SAFFREY, p. 35

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27 Nous citons ici l'apparat de l'édition Saffrey 1954, p. 27 : « omne : correxi 'esse' ». Cf. ibid., p. LXVIII : « tous les manuscrits portent *esse* au lieu de *omne*. Cet *esse* est donc une faute ou une graphie incertaine de l'apographe. Il faut corriger eu égard au texte repris p. 31.1 ».

28 Ici, l'édition Saffrey 1954, p. 35, omet sans le signaler les mots *alachili id est* qui figurent dans l'édition Bardenhewer.

igitur animae quae sequuntur alachili id est intelligentiam
BARDENHEWER, p. 168, l. 5

igitur animae quae sequuntur alachili [*id est*] *intelligentiam*.
PATTIN, p. 57, l. 52-53

Thomas d'Aquin, *Super librum de causis*, Proposition V :

Dicit enim quod *animae* scilicet superiores sicut sunt caelestium corporum *quae sequuntur intelligentiam* quasi post eam ordinatae *sunt completae* scilicet in perfectione naturae animalis.
SAFFREY, p. 40, l. 3-6

Liber de causis, Proposition XI (XII) :

verumtamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae[29] intelligentiae
SAFFREY, p. 77

verumtamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae aliae alachili id est intelligentiae
BARDENHEWER, p. 175, l. 5-6

verumtamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae *alachili* [id est] intelligentiae.
PATTIN, p. 73, l. 70-71

Thomas d'Aquin, *Super librum de causis*, Proposition XI (XII) :

Sed hoc quod ponitur loco huius in hoc libro videtur esse corruptum et malum intellectum habere. Sequitur enim : *verumtamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae intelligentiae* ; debet enim intelligi quod ista duo, scilicet esse et vita, sunt in intelligentia intellectualiter ; *et esse et intelligentia* [etc.]
SAFFREY, p. 79, l. 2-6

Liste des manuscrits qui ont été contrôlés (sigles de l'édition Pattin) :

29 Ici, l'édition Saffrey 1954, p. 77, omet sans le signaler les mots *aliae alachili id est* qui figurent dans l'édition Bardenhewer.

Tradition universitaire :
– (A) Paris, BnF, lat. 14706 [XIII^e siècle]
– (L) Vaticano (Città del), BAV, Vat. lat. 4262 [XIII^e siècle], f. 1ra–19vb
– (Y) Paris, Bibl. Mazarine 3485 [XIV^e siècle], f. 283v–298vb [Coll. de Navarre]
– Bologna, Univ. 861 (1655/6), f. 128vb–145 (n'a pas pu être collationné par Saffrey)

Ces manuscrits présentent des variantes mais aucun n'a *achili / alachili*.

Tradition indépendante :
– (Ω) Toledo, Bibl. Capitular 47.12 [ca a. 1279, copie de la collection de Guillaume de Moerbeke par un clerc de Bayonne], f. 75ra–100va
– (N) Vaticano (Città del), BAV, Borgh. 114 [XIII^e-XIV^e siècle, bibliothèque pontificale], f. 210v–222r

Manuscrits contrôlés, non utilisés par Saffrey :
– Paris, BnF, lat. 16607 [XIII^e siècle ex., legs de Godefroid de Fontaines, Sorbonne], f. 2ra–26va : ⟨8v⟩ Dicit enim quod *animae* scilicet superiores sicut sunt ⟨*add.* : super⟩ caelestium corporum *quae sequuntur intelligentiam* quasi ⟨immediate⟩ ; ⟨15va⟩ sed hoc quod ponitur in loco huius in hoc libro videtur esse corruptum et malum intellectum habere. Sequitur enim : *verumptamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae intelligentiae* ; debet enim intelligi quod ista duo, scilicet esse et vita, sunt in intelligentia ⟨*om.* (saut du même au même) : intellectualiter *et esse et intelligentia*⟩ *in vita sunt duae vitae*
– London, Lambeth Palace 97 [XIII^e siècle ex., couvent OP de Lauthony], f. 145ra–161va
– Firenze, Bibl. Laur., Plut XXIX dext. cod. 10 [XIII^e siècle ex., origine parisienne, couvent OFM Santa Croce], f. 93ra–107rb
– Bruges, Bibl. du Séminaire, 106 (145) [XIII^e siècle, Abbaye des Dunes], f. 93ra–104vb (consulté par Saffrey)

Conclusion : Ces manuscrits présentent des variantes, dont certaines ne sont pas signalées par l'édition Saffrey. Mais aucune ne restitue *achili* ou *alachili*. Ce terme, par ailleurs, ne figure pas dans *l'Index thomisticus* du P. Roberto Busa.

3.3 *Deuxième enquête : L'absence d'***achili / alachili** *dans certains manuscrits du* **Liber de causis**

Thomas n'écrit jamais *achili / alachili*. Deux hypothèses peuvent expliquer ce fait. Soit l'omission est volontaire, et pourrait s'expliquer, par exemple, par la volonté d'éliminer les apports arabes au profit de la philosophie grecque. La tentative de Thomas de substituer les *Éléments* de Proclus au *Liber de causis* et l'étymologie grecque qu'il donne, après d'autres, à *yliathim*, iraient dans ce

sens. Soit l'omission d'*achili / alachili* est involontaire et s'explique parce que Thomas d'Aquin n'a pas *achili* dans ses manuscrits du *Liber de causis*.

Or il existe des manuscrits du *Liber de causis* qui n'ont pas *achili / alachili*. Dans l'apparat critique de l'édition Pattin, huit des dix manuscrits entièrement collationnés n'ont pas *achili / alachili*. Plus exactement, les manuscrits du *Liber de causis* utilisés par A. Pattin qui omettent dans les trois cas *alachili* sont au nombre de six, sur dix utilisés, plus deux qui l'omettent dans deux cas sur trois. Parmi ces manuscrits, le fameux manuscrit Oxford, Bodl. Selden sup. 24 [XIII^e siècle in.], peut-être le plus ancien, portant l'*ex-libris* de Saint-Alban, contient à un autre endroit, en III § 32 (éd. Pattin, p. 52, l. 14), *alachhir*, au lieu de *intelligentia*.

A. Pattin affirme en outre qu'il a consulté trente-cinq autres manuscrits : « L'apparat critique indique toutes les variantes des dix manuscrits entièrement collationnés, et de plus, en de nombreux endroits offrant des *cruces*, les variantes les plus intéressantes des autres témoins consultés »[30]. Si Pattin ne dit rien concernant les manuscrits consultés aux endroits où apparaît *achili*, son silence signifie-t-il que tous ces manuscrits ont *achili / alachili* ?

Pour répondre à cette question, voici le résultat de quelques sondages effectués parmi les manuscrits simplement consultés par Pattin :

> Paris, BnF, lat. 16082 [XIII^e siècle], f. 312r : Prima rerum etc. [...] est aclili id est intelligencia completa ; f. 312v [Propositions IV-V] animae igitur quae sequuntur ilachili id est intelligentiam.
>
> Paris, BnF, lat. 16084 [XIII^e siècle (Pattin) ; XIV^e siècle in. (BnF)], f. 199ra : Quod est quia causa quod ex eo sequitur causam primam est intelligencia prima [*exp.*] quia... ⟨*om. alachili* ; cette omission n'est pas signalée dans l'apparat de Pattin⟩ ; 199rb anime igitur que sequuntur intelligenciam perfecte sunt et complete ⟨om. *alachili* ; cette omission n'est pas signalée dans l'apparat de Pattin⟩.
>
> Paris, BnF, latin 6322 [XIII^e siècle (Pattin) ; XIV^e siècle (BnF)], f. 183v : quod est quia omne quod sequitur causam primam est intelligentia completa ⟨om. *achili*⟩.

30 *Liber de causis*, éd. Pattin, p. 132.

Ce test laisse penser qu'une forte proportion de manuscrits du *Liber de causis* n'a pas *achili / alachili*. On peut donc raisonnablement suggérer que le silence de Thomas provient du fait que lui et son entourage disposent d'un manuscrit ou de plusieurs manuscrits qui n'ont pas *achili / alachili*. Il faudrait donc réexaminer s'il convient d'imprimer ce terme dans le lemme de la proposition IV, comme le fait le P. Saffrey, p. 26, col. 1, de son édition.

3.4 *Troisième enquête : Les graphies de* yliathim *dans les manuscrits du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin*

Une troisième enquête a consisté à chercher les graphies de *yliathim* dans les manuscrits du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin.

J'ai effectué des vérifications sur les passages suivants :

Liber de causis, Proposition VIII(IX) :

> et intelligentia est habens *yliatim* quoniam est esse et forma et similiter anima est habens *yliatim* et natura est habens *yliatim*. Et causae quidem primae non est *yliatim* quoniam ipsa est esse tantum. Quod si dixerit aliquis : necesse est ut sit ⟨habens⟩ *yliatim*, dicemus : *yliatim* id est suum esse infinitum, et individuum suum est bonitas pura, effluens [etc.]
>
> SAFFREY, p. 57[31]

> et intelligentia est habens helyatin et formam et similiter anima est habens helyatin et natura est habens helyatin. et causae quidem primae non est helyatin quoniam ipsa est esse tantum. quod si dixerit aliquis : necesse est ut sit helyatin, dicemus : helyatine id est suum est infinitum, et individuum suum est bonitas pura, effluens [etc.]
>
> BARDENHEWER, p. 173, l. 9-14

> et intelligentia est habens *yliathim* quoniam est esse et forma et similiter anima est habens *yliathim* et natura est habens *yliathim*. Et causae quidem primae non est *yliathim*, quoniam ipsa est esse tantum. Quod si dixerit aliquis : necesse est ut sit *yliathim*, dicemus : *yliathim* suum est infinitum et individuum suum est bonitas pura, influens [etc.].
>
> PATTIN, p. 69, l. 98-70, l. 5

31 Saffrey ne signale pas les nombreuses différences qui existent entre son texte et celui de Bardenhewer.

Thomas d'Aquin, *Super librum de causis*, Proposition VIII(IX) :

> Similiter etiam prosequitur quantum ad esse [...] Nam *intelligentia habet yliatim* id est aliquid materiale vel ad modum materiae se habens ; dicitur enim *yliatim* ab *yle* quod est materia. Et quodomo hoc sit exponit subdens : *Quoniam est esse et forma*. Quidditas enim et substantia ipsius intelligentiae est quaedam forma subsistens immaterialis sed quia ipsa non est suum esse sed est subsistens in esse participato comparatur ipsa forma subsistens ad esse participatum sicut potentia ad actum aut materia ad formam. *Et similiter* etiam *anima est habens yliatim* [...]. Similiter etiam *natura est habens yliatim* [...] *Causa* autem *prima* nullo modo habet *yliatim* quia non habet esse participatum sed ipsa *est esse* purum et per consequens bonitas pura.
>
> SAFFREY, p. 64, l. 4-19

Les manuscrits contrôlés, dont ceux de la tradition universitaire :

– Bologna, Univ. 861 (1655/6), f. 128vb–145 (n'a pas pu être collationné par Saffrey) : Et *similiter* etiam *anima est habens yliathim* [...] *natura est habens yliachim* [...] *Causa* autem *prima* nullo modo habet *yliathim* quia non habet esse participatum ⟨sed] verum⟩ ipsa est esse purum.

Les manuscrits contrôlés de tradition indépendante :

– (Ω) Toledo, Bibl. Capitular 47.12, f. 75ra–100va : ⟨86⟩ Nam intelligentia habet *yliatim* id est aliquid materiale vel ad modum materiae se habens ; dicitur enim *yliatim* ab *yle* quod est materia. Et quodomo hoc est exponit subdens : *Quoniam est esse et forma.* [...] Et *similiter* etiam *anima est habens yliatim* [...] *natura est habens yliachim* [...] *Causa* autem *prima* nullo modo habet *yliachim* quia non habet esse participatum sed ipsa *est esse* purum et per consequens bonitas pura.

Manuscrits non utilisés par Saffrey :

– Paris, BnF, lat. 16607 [XIII^e siècle ex., legs de Godefroid de Fontaines, Sorbonne], f. 2ra–26va : ⟨12vb⟩ Nam intelligentia habet *yliatim* id est aliquid materiale vel ad modum materiae se habens ; dicitur enim *yliacym* ab *yle* quod est materia. Et quodomo hoc sit exponit subdens : *Quoniam est esse et forma.* [...] Et *similiter* etiam *anima est habens yliatim* [...] *natura est habens yliachi⟨ ei* a. c. *⟩m* [...] *Causa* autem *prima* nullo modo habet *yliachim* quia non habet esse participatum sed ipsa *est esse* purum et per consequens bonitas pura.
– Firenze, Bibl. Laur., Plut XXIX dext. cod. 10 [XIII^e siècle ex., origine parisienne, couvent OFM Santa Croce], f. 93ra–107rb : ⟨100va⟩ : Nam intelligentia habet *yliatim* id est aliquid materiale vel ad modum materiae se habens ;

> dicitur enim *yliatim* ab *yle* quod est materia … Et *similiter* etiam *anima est habens yliachim non solum… natura est habens yliachim* […] *Causa* autem *prima* nullo modo habet *yliachim* […].

On en déduit que Thomas d'Aquin n'a, semble-t-il, que deux graphies : *yliatim** la première fois (le signe * signifiant que cette graphie n'est pas répertoriée par Pattin, voir *infra*) ; *yliathim* ou *yliachim** les deux fois suivantes. Ceci est assez régulier dans les manuscrits que nous avons consultés, même s'il se rencontre aussi d'autres graphies, par exemple dans le manuscrit Paris, BnF, lat. 16607 : *yliacym**.

3.5 *Les différentes graphies de* yliatim/yliathim

A. Pattin imprime en 1966 *yliathim* et donne seize graphies variantes dans son apparat :

> *eliachim*, *eliathim*, *elyathim*, *elyatim*, *elyatin*, *heilateia*, *heilatin*, *heiletue*, *helecine*, *helyatim*, *helyatine*, *heylatin*, *heylatine*, *heylatym*, *latine*, *yatine*, *yliathim*. D'autres graphies existent, non répertoriées par Pattin, signalées ici par une *. En 1976, Pattin affirmait que la graphie *yliathim* devrait être changée en *hyliathim**[32].

Richard Taylor considère pour sa part que « le mot *yliatim** que saint Thomas trouva dans son texte du *De causis* est une corruption tardive de la translittération originelle de Gérard de Crémone, *helyatin** »[33]. Saffrey donne *yliatim**, Bardenhewer *helyatin**, Fauser (pour le texte d'Albert le Grand) *hyliatin**[34].

Autres graphies rencontrées :

- Paris, BnF, lat. 16082 [XIII^e siècle], f. 314v : intelligentia est habens heliatin* et formam ⟨*sic*⟩ quia similiter anima habens heliatin* et formam nam est habens esse tantum quod si dixerit aliquis necesse est ut si ⟨*sic*⟩ heliatim* dicamus heliatim* i. suum est infinitum quia individuum suum est bonitas pura et fluens […]
- Paris, BnF, lat. 16084 [XIII^e siècle (Pattin) ; BnF (XIV^e siècle in.)], f. 199vb : habens heliathim* quoniam esse est et forma et similiter est anima habens heliathim* et natura est habens helyathim* et cause quidem prime non est eliathim. quia ipsa est causatum (sic !) esse quod si dixerit aliquis necesse est

32 Pattin 1976, p. 471.

33 Taylor 1979, p. 510.

34 Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis a Prima Causa*, c. 18, p. 110.

esse ut sit ei ⟨*add.* OPS⟩ heliachim* dicemus eliathim i. suum est infinitum et individuum suum est bonitas pura…

3.6 *La corruption du § 90 du* Liber de causis

La Proposition VIII(IX), § 90 a un texte qui paraît très corrompu dans les manuscrits du *Liber de causis*. Voici notamment une corruption du texte qui pourrait soit expliquer l'étymologie *yliathim/ ulè* soit en dériver (sachant que Thomas, lui, a un texte correct) :

> Paris, BnF, lat. 16082 [XIII^e siècle], f. 314v : intelligentia est habens heliatin et formam ⟨*sic*⟩ quia similiter anima habens heliatin et formam.
>
> *Liber de causis* éd. Pattin, manuscrits BCTb : et intelligentia est habens yliathim […] et formam[35].

Qu'*hyliatin* soit un terme des traductions arabes de Plotin (R. Taylor) ou qu'il puisse même remonter à la traduction des *Éléments de théologie* (E. Wakelnig), la présence de la formule *helyatin et forma* pourrait avoir conduit ceux qui ne comprenaient pas la valeur épexégétique du *et*, à l'équivalence *helyatin* = matière.

4 Le texte du *Liber de causis* dont disposait Thomas

Pour résumer, les caractéristiques des lemmes étudiés de Thomas sont les suivantes :

- Proposition IV : tous les manuscrits portent *esse* au lieu de *omne* et absence de *achili/alachili*
- Proposition V : absence de *achili / alachili*
- Proposition XI(XII) : absence de *achili / alachili* : verumtamen esse et vita in intelligentia sunt duae ⟨*om.* : alachili, id est⟩ intelligentiae. Omission de *in esse* : et esse et intelligentia in vita sunt due vite et intelligentia et vita ⟨*om.* in esse⟩ sunt duo esse. Le P. Saffrey explique cette omission par une « faute de Thomas », ou un « oubli du copiste dans la rapidité de la dictée »[36].
- Proposition VIII(IX) : graphie : *yliatim/yliathim*

Thomas n'a pas la corruption *yliathim et formam*.

35 Autre corruption du texte à cet endroit (éd. Pattin, manuscrit L) : *et intelligentia est habens yliathim* […] *et natura est habens yliathim*.

36 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. LXVII.

Sigles de l'édition Pattin (1954)			
L	Vaticano (Città del), Vat. lat. 2984 [XIII^e siècle in.]	omission des trois occurrences de achili / alachili	§ 90 heylatym heylatine
O	Vaticano (Città del), Ottob. lat. 1415 : trente et une propositions	"	§ 90 heylatin
P	Paris, BnF, lat. 6318 [XIII^e-XIV^e siècle]	"	§ 90 heylatin
S	Oxford, Bodl. Selden sup. 24 [XIII^e siècle in.]	"	§ 90 heilatin
U	Vaticano (Città del), BAV, Urb. lat. 206 (ante a. 1253)	"	§ 90 eliathim elyathim
V	Vaticano (Città del), Vat. lat. 2089 [XIII^e (2/2) siècle]	"	§ 90 yliathim

Ces caractéristiques contribuent à dresser un portrait robot de son texte (ou de ses textes : car il connaissait la version à trente et une propositions et celle à trente-deux propositions), qui ne correspond pas à celui édité par Pattin.

Le texte de Thomas se rapproche de la tradition qui omet *achili/alachili* dans les trois occurrences et qui est signalée ainsi dans les apparats de l'édition Pattin :

> achili : *om.* BCLOPSUV
> alachili : sic habet ACS ; achili T ; *om.* B *sed add. in mg a.m.* alachilim B. ; *om.* LOPSUVb
> alachili : alachih A ; *om* BCLOPSUV

Il faut en ôter les manuscrits B et C qui, eux, portent la corruption *yliathim et formam*[37].

37 *Et intelligentia est habens yliathim* ⟨*quoniam est esse*] *om. BCTb*⟩ *et forma* ⟨*m : BCTb*⟩ *et similiter anima est habens yliathim.*

La graphie *yliatim* ne se retrouve dans aucun des manuscrits LOPSUV[38]. *Yliathim* est la graphie du manuscrit V. On peut en conclure, sous réserve de plus ample informé, que Thomas a un manuscrit dont le texte a des caractéristiques communes avec celui de V (Vat. lat. 2089), que Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny date de la deuxième moitié du XIII^e^ siècle et qu'elle considère comme français, voire parisien[39].

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38 Graphies de B et C d'après l'éd. Pattin : 98 : *helyatim* BC ; 99 : *elyatim* B *helyatim* C ; 103 : B *helyatim*.

39 D'Alverny 1963, p. 256-258 : *codex ab uno librario gallico, forsan parisino exaratus* ; repris dans D'Alverny 1994, p. 89-91. Pattin 1966, p. 103, date quant à lui ce manuscrit de la fin du XIII^e^ siècle et renvoie également à *Aristoteles Latinus. Codices* 1955, vol. II, p. 1221, n. 1846. Carmody 2003, p. 31*, utilise ce manuscrit pour son édition du grand commentaire d'Averroès au *De celo et mundo*.

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CHAPTER 15

Proclus and the *Liber de causis* in Meister Eckhart's Works

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> The scholar who, in sooth, does little else than handle books—with the philologist of average attainments their number may amount to two hundred a day—ultimately forgets entirely and completely the capacity of thinking for himself
>
> F. NIETZSCHE, Ecce homo, New York, 2004 p. 48

1 Introduction

An author cannot be reduced to his library. Like any other "fact", an interpretation is necessary, by means of which the meaning and context of a quotation can be determined. I therefore agree with Dragos Calma[1] when he denounces "les démarches cabalistiques de certaines études qui se contentent des nombres et des statistiques", because "une citation n'est jamais gratuite puisqu'elle présuppose un choix, une claire intentionnalité de la part de celui qui l'utilise. Savoir la faire résonner tient de la virtuosité interprétative de l'historien".

It is not easy to evaluate the importance of a source by taking into account one or more of these aspects: implicit, explicit, literal, non-literal, *ad sensum*, false attribution.[2] The mere statistical data does not reveal the importance of a source. A single implicit quotation, even a non-literal one, can be at the heart of an original interpretation, and the historian must take this into account.

1 Calma 2010, p. XV.
2 Bertolacci 1998, p. 261–339.

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On the other hand, the frequent use of "formulas" quoted literally and with mention of the author or work, may indicate the use of *florilegia*, which makes a quotation less significant than the simple statistical data may lead one to believe. A good exemple of this is Aristotle, and one of his works most quoted by Eckhart: *De anima*. According to the statistics,[3] Eckhart cites this treatise about 300 times. Of these occurrences, however, more than half are reduced to brief sentences, not always literal, despite the mention of the author and the work. Yet if we relate this abstract statistical datum with the immediate context in which the quotation appears, and if we take into account the Eckhartian theory of the intellect, the interpretation might very well change. As far as philosophical interpretation is concerned, scholars admit a general distance of the Eckhartian doctrine from the Aristotelian one.[4] Indeed, Eckhart, following the doctrine of Maimonides, recognizes Aristotle as *der hoechste undern der meistern*[5] but only in the domain of the natural sciences, not in that of divine science.[6]

As far as works in Middle High German are concerned, things are remarkably complicated, for at least two reasons. The first is textual: quotations are often implicit, or explicitly indeterminate (to use Bertolacci's category[7]) or usually introduced by expressions such as *ein meister*, *ein alter meister* or *ein heidnischer meister*. *Ein meister* can refer to both a biblical authority or to a pagan master.[8] The second reason is a linguistic one: the difference between citation *ad litteram* and citation *ad sensum* cannot be applied.

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3 Calma 2009, p. 526; Beccarisi 2008, p. 11–12.

4 Beccarisi 2016, p. 223–240, with cited bibliographical references; see also Retucci 2012, p. 11–37.

5 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon* 15 Q, DW I, p. 249,1 sgg.

6 Meister Eckhart, *In Sap*., n. 208, LW II, p. 542: *Praedictis concordat quod Rabbi Moyses l. II c. 2, quod incipit 'Aristotele', sic ait: 'quidquid dixit Aristoteles in omnibus entibus, quae sunt a sphaera lunae usque ad centrum terrae, verum est sine dubio, nec repellit illud', 'nisi qui non intelligit'. 'Quidquid vero locutus est Aristoteles de his, quae sunt a sphaera lunae superius, est verisimile'. Et infra c. 25 dicit: 'Abubacer dubitat de verbis Aristotelis', 'et eius dubitatio est, utrum scivit Aristoteles egressionem centri sphaerae solis'. Et infra: 'quidquid dixit Aristoteles in omnibus, quae sunt sub sphaera lunae, procedit secundum ordinem sensus, et verba ipsius sequuntur ex ratione, et causa naturalis est manifesta in eis. Quidquid autem est in caelis, non est homo consecutus, ut sciret ea quae ibi sunt', adducens illud Psalmi: caelum caeli domino, terram autem dedit filiis hominum. 'Quod est dicere quod creator solus scit veritatem' eorum, quae in caelis sunt, 'in fine perfectionis. Super his autem, quae sunt sub caelis, dedit potestatem homini, ut sciret ea'*. On Meister Eckhart and Maimonides cf. Di Segni 2012, p. 103–140.

7 Bertolacci 1998, p. 261–339.

8 On Meister Eckhart's use of source cf. Vinzent 2014, p. 105–122; Sturlese 2008, p. 7–9.

This is a good starting point for my contribution, concerning the influence of *Liber de causis* and Proclus on Meister Eckhart's thought. Since it is an argument already widely discussed in excellent studies, I will concentrate my attention on four examples.

2 Daz Lieht der Lieht

The sermon 80[9] is one of the few documents to explicitly quote Albert the Great. It represents the only occurrence within the context of Eckhart's entire production, in which he refers to the *Liber de causis* under the title *Licht der Lichte*, *Lumen Luminum*.

Eckhart aims at interpreting the passage "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day" (Luke 16:19). The parable of the rich man and Lazarus tells of the relationship between a rich man and a poor beggar named Lazarus. Their destinies are opposite as between them "stands a *great abyss*".

The rich man and Lazarus lead two totally opposite forms of existence. The goods of the rich man contrast with Lazarus's sufferings, but after death, their conditions are totally reversed. Indeed, Lazarus is released from the sufferings of his terrestrial existence, while the rich man is condemned to some sort of torment in Hades.

However, Eckhart seems almost uninterested in the content, as he only focuses on the opening line of the parable: "There was a rich man".

Eckhart seeks to comment on the word *dives*, which refers in particular to the reign of God, and which is manifested through five characteristics or aspects:[10]

> The man was also 'rich'. So God is rich in Himself and in all things. Now note! The richness of God consists in five things.
>
> The first: because He is the first cause; therefore He is pouring Himself into all things.
>
> The second: because He is simple in His being; therefore He is the inwardness of all things.

9 On this Sermon cf. Geyer 1964, p. 121–126; Ruh 1996, p. 126–129; Retucci 2008, p. 135–166, in particular p. 139–140; Goris 2009, p. 151–159, in particular p. 157; Bauchwitz 2016, p. 291–298; Beccarisi 2019, p. 38–41.

10 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon* 80 Q, DW III, p. 381,1 sgg.; English version by Vinzent 2019, p. 729–733. I would like thank him for having made available unedited material.

The third: because He is originating; therefore He is communicating Himself to all things.

The fourth: because He is unchangeable; therefore He is the most stable.

The fifth: because He is perfect; therefore He is the most desirable.

He is the first cause; therefore He is pouring Himself into all things. Of this a pagan master says that the primary cause pours itself out more into all causes than secondary causes pour themselves into their works.

He is also simple in His being. What is 'simple'? **Bishop Albert** says: Simple is the thing that is in itself one without a second, that is God, and all united things are by the fact that He is. There the creatures are one in the one and are God in God; by themselves they are nothing.

Third: because He is the originating [power], therefore He is flowing into all things. About this **Bishop Albert** says: In three ways he commonly flows into all things: with being, life and light, and especially into the intellectual soul by the potentiality of all things, and by a return of the creatures into their first origin: this is the light of lights, because 'every gift and perfection flow from the father of lights', as Saint James says.

Fourth: because He is unchangeable; therefore He is the most stable. Now note, how God unites Himself to things. He unites Himself with things and yet retains Himself as one in Himself, and makes all things one in Him. Of this Christ says: You shall be transformed into me, but not me into you. This derives from His immutability, His incommensurability and the smallness of things. About this a prophet says that all things compared to God are as small as a drop before the wild ocean. Whoever threw a drop into the ocean, the drop would transform itself into the ocean, but not the ocean into the drop. So it happens to the soul when she draws God into herself, she is transformed into God, so that the soul becomes divine, but God does not become the soul. Then the soul loses her name and her powers, but not her will and not her being. Then, the soul remains in God, as God remains in Himself. Of this **Bishop Albert** says: In the will, wherein a man dies, he will remain eternally.

Fifth, because He is perfect; therefore He is the most desirable. God is perfect with regard to Himself and to all things. What is perfection in God? It is that He is the good of Himself and of all things. Therefore, all things desire Him, because He is their good.

Sermon 80, *Homo quidam erat dives*, exhibits three explicit references to Albert, the first two of which are significantly related to each other. Bernard Geyer, Kurt Ruh, Fiorella Retucci and Wouter Goris proposed that, in the Sermon *Homo*

Quidam Dives, the *Liber de causis* plays a crucial role, albeit through the mediation of Albert's *De causis et processu universitatis*. In fact, in this work, Albert evaluates the different titles under which the *Liber de causis* circulated and offers a possible attribution.

The School of Avicenna—writes Albert—referred to it as the *De lumine luminum* (On the *Light of Lights*). In order to provide an explanation for this title, Albert affirms that the first cause flows into things in a threefold way: first there is an influence constitutive of being; then, there is an influence that produces virtue, and finally, a third type of influence that he calls *influentia reductionis ad primum fontem*. The second reference would also be, according to the interpreters, a quotation from Albert's *De causis et processu universitatis*.

In this case, it is an explanation of the term *einvaltic* (*simplex*), which is one of the five characteristics of the Divine.[11]

The exegetical tradition that claims that Eckhart was deeply influenced by the Neoplatonic tradition through Albert's mediation, seems hereby confirmed: the neoplatonic tradition that from Albert reached Bertothold of Moosburg via Eckhart, has at the same time established the importance of the *Liber de causis* in Meister Eckhart's work.

However, as I had the opportunity to demonstrate recently at the *Lectio Albertina* held at the Albertus Magnus Institut in Bonn, this is not the case.[12]

The source of Eckhart, in fact, is not Albert's *Liber de causis et processu universitatis* but rather Albert's *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, as demonstrated by the following synopsis.

Albert the Great, *Super Matth.* c. 6, p. 181,81–182,8.21–29	**Meister Eckhart, *Pr. 80*, p. 382,9–384,5.6–386,3; p. 388,1–4**
Et secundum hunc intellectum in eo quod dicit: *qui es*, **quinque notantur**, ens videlicet primum, simplex, fontale, immutabile, perfectissimum.	Diu rîcheit gotes diu liget **an vünf dingen**.
Ex primitate est influentissimum,	Daz êrste: daz er diu êrste sache ist, her umbe ist er ûzgiezende sich in alliu dinc.

11 Albert the Great, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, l. 1 tr. 1 c. 1, p. 61,16–22.
12 Beccarisi 2019.

(*cont.*)

ex simplicitate communissimum et intimum,	Daz ander: daz er einvaltic ist an sînem wesene, her umbe ist er diu innerkeit aller dinge.
ex fontalitate causalissimum,	Daz dritte: daz er ursprunclich ist, her umbe ist er gemeinende sich allen dingen.
ex immutabilitate **conservantissimum**,	Daz vierde: daz er unwandelhaftic ist, her umbe ist er daz **behaldelîcheste**.
ex perfectissimitate **desideratissimum** omnium.	Daz vünfte: daz er volkomen ist, her umbe ist er daz **begerlîcheste**.
Primum enim influit omnibus, et a nullo influitur ei, et est liberalitatis et magnificentiae profusae. Influit enim nullo indigens, et nullum aliorum aliquid alicui influere potest nisi per hoc quod accipit et habet ab ipso. Et hic pater sic influens merito est orandus. Iac. 1 (17): 'Omne datum optimum et omne donum perfectum desursum est, descendens a patre luminum, apud quem non est transmutatio neque vicissitudinis obumbratio'. (…) **Primum enim est, ut dicit Philosophus, quod influit, non supposito quodam alio, quod sibi det influere. Aristoteles: 'Causa primaria plus est influens quam secundaria'.**	**Er ist diu êrste sache, her umbe ist er îngiezende sich in alliu dinc. Dâ von sprichet ein heidenischer meister, daz sich diu êrste sache mê gieze in alle die sache, dan die andern sache sich in ir werk giezen.**
Per simplicitatem autem est communissimum et intimum, quia, sicut dicit Philosophus, **quanto aliquid simplicius est, tanto in pluribus invenitur et sui ad plura indigetur.**	**Er ist ouch einvaltic an sînem wesene.** Waz ist einvaltic? Daz sprichet bischof Albreht: daz dinc ist einvaltic, daz an im selber ein ist âne ander, daz ist got, und alliu vereintiu dinc haltent sich in daz, daz er ist. **Dâ sint die crêatûren ein in dem einem und sint got in gote; an in selben sint sie niht.**
[ex fontalitate causalissimum]	Daz dritte: daz er ursprunclich ist, dar umbe ist er ûzvliezende in alliu dinc.

(*cont.*)

Albert the Great, *De caus. et proc. univ.* l. 2 tr. 1 c. 1, p. 61,16–22

Lumen primae causae tripliciter influat rebus, scilicet influentia constitutionis ad esse et influentia irradiationis ad perfectionem virtutis et operis et influentia **reductionis ad primum fontem** ut ad boni principium, et huius influentia luminis omnis illuminationis principium sit et lumen, erit ipsum lumen luminum.

Hie von sprichet bischof Albreht: **drîerhande wîs vliuzet er** ûz in alliu dinc gemeinlîche: mit wesene und mit lebene und mit liehte und sunderlîche in die vernünftigen sêle an mügentheit aller dinge und **an einem widerrucke der crêatûren in irn êrsten ursprunc**:

Albert the Great, *Super Matth.* c. 6, p. 182,4–10.75–76; 183,6–10

Et hic pater sic influens merito est orandus. iac. i (17): 'Omne datum optimum et omne donum perfectum desursum est, descendens a patre luminum, apud quem non est transmutatio neque vicissitudinis obumbratio'. Non enim mutatur, ut quandoque fluat et quandoque non, neque vicissitudinem donorum recipit.

diz ist lieht der liehte, wan alle gâbe und volkomenheit vliezent von dem vater der liehte, als sant Jâcobus sprichet.

ex immutabilitate conservantissimum (…) Immutabilitate fundat et continet et conservat ea quibus se influit.

Daz vierde: daz er unwandelhaftic ist, dar umbe ist er daz behaldelîcheste. Nû merket, wie sich got vereinet mit den dingen. **Er vereinet sich mit den dingen und beheltet sich doch ein an im selben, und alliu dinc an im ein**. Hie von sprichet Kristus: ir sult gewandelt werden in mich und ich niht in iuch. Daz kumet von sîner unwandelhafticheit und von sîner unmæzlicheit und von der dinge kleinheit.

(*cont.*)

Perfectissimum autem est hoc esse et ideo desideratissimum. Unde dicit Philosophus, quod 'omnia appetunt esse divinum et propter illud agunt, quidquid agunt'. Agg. II (8): 'Veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus'. **Omnia enim istius patris desiderant superadventum**. Sap. IX: 'Omnia desiderabilia huic non valent comparari'. **Esse enim datur ab eo, quo accepto nihil desideratur amplius, eo quod hoc est omnis naturae bonum et optimum**. Exod. XXXIII (19.17): 'Ego ostendam tibi omne bonum; invenisti enim gratiam coram me'. In hoc est gaudium plenum, ut hoc comprehendamus, ut possumus. Ioh. XVI (24): 'Petite, ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum'. Matth. V (48): '**Pater vester caelestis perfectus est**'.	**Daz vünfte: daz er volkomen ist, dar umbe ist er daz begerlîcheste**. Got ist sîn selbes volkomen und aller dinge. Waz ist volkomenheit an gote? **Daz ist, daz er sîn selbes guot ist und aller dinge guot. Her umbe begernt sîn alliu dinc, wan er ir guot ist.**

The evidence supporting this are: the five-part structure, the literal quotations of the five features of God, and the accuracy with which Eckhart translates the Albertinian text, going so far as to reproduce the superlative *conservantissimum* with *behaldelîcheste* and *desideratissimum* with *begerlîcheste*.

A closer look reveals even more. In Sermon 80, the quotation from the *Liber de causis*, attributed by Eckhart to a pagan master, corresponds in Albert's commentary to the same quotation attributed to the *Philosophus* (Aristotle), and in both cases it is used to comment on God's quality of 'firstness'.

Moreover, the famous *licht der lichte* would assume a completely different significance in this context when compared to Albert's text. Indeed, Eckhart says, I quote: "This is the light of light, because (*wan* in Middle High German) all gifts and perfection flow from the Father of light, as the Apostle James says". Hence, the First Cause is not (or not only) the "light of light", because Eckhart read Albert's commentary on the *Liber de causis*, but rather because he had in mind Albert's commentary on the *Gospel of Matthew*, in which the verse of St. James is quoted to express the *fontalitas* of God.

The discovery of this important new source from the Albert's commentary on the *Gospel of Matthew* reduces Kurt Ruh's claim that Eckhart "changed" his

sources and rephrased them into his own words.[13] In the German Sermons, Eckhart does not modify his sources, but he rather seeks to translate them as faithfully as possible.

That's why I am not convinced that two other quotations in the Sermon 80, allegedly attributed to the *Liber de causis*, come in fact from this work:

***Liber de causis* prop. V n. 60, p. 60,35–40**	**Meister Eckhart, *Pr.* *80*, DW III, 380, p. 2.**	**Meister Eckhart, *Pr.* *80*, DW III, 382, p. 5.**
Cum ergo res est causa tantum et non est causatum, non scitur per causam primam neque narratur quoniam est **superior narratione**, neque consequitur eam loquela. Quod est narratio non fit nisi per loquelam, et loquela per intelligentiam, et intelligentia per cogitationem, et cogitatio per meditationem, et meditatio per sensum. **Causa autem prima est supra res** omnes quoniam est causa eis; propter illud ergo fit quod ipsa **non cadit sub sensu** et **meditatione et cogitatione et intelligentia et loquela. Non est ergo narrabilis**.	got ist **überwesenlich** und **überredelich** und **überverstentlich**, daz **natiurlich verstân** ist	got ist **überwesenlich** und **überlobelich** und **überredelich** und **überverstentlich**

Of the attributes describing God (*überwesenlich*, *überredelich*, *überverstentlich*), only *überredelich* shows a vague correspondence with the expression *superior narratione*. Thus it seems that Eckhart summarizes and rewrites proposition VI of the *Liber de causis*, to such an extent that we can say, as Dagmar Gottschall claims,[14] that it is more a passage inspired by the *Liber de causis* rather than a quotation as such.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find this same quotation in another text, but with a different attribution. A pseudo-Eckhartian work, edited by Franz Pfeiffer, cites Dionysius instead of the *Liber de causis*:[15]

13 Ruh 1996, p. 127.

14 Gottschall 2015, p. 96.

15 Ps.-Eckhart, *Tr.* XI.2, 508,6 f. cited in Gottschall 2015, p. 97.

> Dionysius sprichet: diu êrste sache ist ob allen namen si ist überminnic, überweselich, überverstentlich, überredelich und übernâtûrelich.

The list of attributes is repeated almost identically to that found in Eckhart's *Sermon 80*: the differences are the addition of *überminnic* and *übernâtûrelich*, and the definition preceding those attributes (*diu êrste sache ist ob allen namen*), which is an important clue for the identification of Eckhart's source. The definition *diu êrste sache ist ob allen namen* could be both a quotation *ad litteram* of the proposition XXI of the *Liber de causis* (*causa prima est super omne nomen quo nominatur*), but also a quotation *ad litteram* from the second Letter from Saint Paul to the Philippians (Philipp. 2 (9) *quod est super omne nomen*) cited by Thomas Aquinas in the first chapter of his commentary to Pseudo-Dionysius' *De divinis nominibus*.

So which one is Eckhart's source? I claim that neither Dionysius nor the *Liber de causis*, but rather Thomas Aquinas' *Commentary on the Divine Names*, as the following passage suggests:[16]

> Deus, qui ipsa Unitas quasi existens unus per suam essentiam, quae est supersubstantialis (*überwesenlich*), superponitur substantiis et quae est super mentem superponitur mentibus, id est intellectualibus spiritibus; et ipsum Bonum, scilicet Deus, quod est super deliberationem, id est super omnem rationem, est indeliberabilis omnibus deliberationibus, id est non investigabile aliqua ratione creata (*überverstentlich, daz natiurlich verstân ist*) et quod est super verbum, id est super omnem locutionem creaturae (*überredelich*), est ineffabile, id est indicibile, omni verbo creato.

In this commentary to *De divinis nominibus*. Thomas Aquinas explains what *super deliberationem* means, i.e., "not susceptible of inquiry by any created reason" (*non investigabile aliqua ratione creata*) which corresponds, in my opinion, to *daz natiurlich verstân ist* in the German sermon.

Could the reference to the *Liber de causis* in German *Sermon 80* be a "faux renvoi", to use Dragos Calma's definition?[17] Hardly, it seems. The attribution to the *Liber de causis* is not entirely false, since the quotation seems in fact indebted to proposition XXI n. 166: "The First Cause is above every name by which it is named" (*Causa prima est super omne nomen quo nominatur*).[18] The

16 Thomas Aquinas, *Super div. nom.* I 1 24.

17 Calma 2010, p. 8.

18 *Liber de causis* XXI n. 166, p. 93, 68–69. English translation by Brand 1984, p. 49.

double attribution, and the fact that this quotation is documented three times in two different works, with the same phrasing, implies two hypotheses: the intermediate Eckhart's source is Thomas and Tr. XI.2 is a Eckhartian work.

In my opinion, the example confirms the observation from which we started, that is to say, the extreme fragility of statistical data alone, which must be considered with great caution, especially with regard to works in the vernacular.

I turn now to the heart of my contribution, based on the statistical data of Mario Meliadò,[19] which corrects Fiorella Retucci's:[20] the *Liber de causis* is cited 120 times, only ten of which appear in sermons in German. Proclus, on the other hand, is cited only twenty times.

Meliadò reports[21] that of these 120 occurrences, Eckhart combines the authority of the *Liber* with that of Proclus in only five places. This approach distinguishes Eckhart from Dietrich of Freiberg, who frequently emphasizes the connection between the two authorities and underlines the dependence of the *Liber* on the *Elementatio*. On the contrary, Eckhart seems to prefer the *Liber de causis* to Proclus' authority, as I will try to demostrate. In particular I would like to show the great importance of proposition XV of the *Liber de causis* in Meister Eckhart's work.[22]

Despite its importance for Eckhartian speculation, the presence of proposition XV of the *Liber de causis* in his work does not seem to have aroused much interest among scholars. Its analysis is simply absent from the works of Kurt Ruh, Beierwaltes and Retucci, while Meliadò devotes to it only a note, in which he traces back the Eckhartian use of this proposition to Thomistic influence.[23] Alain de Libera has studied abundantly the influence of proposition XV on Eckhart's thought, but by limiting it to the metaphysics of Exodus, that is, to the context of the Eckhartian interpretation of the first and only name of God: *Ego sum qui sum*.[24]

And yet proposition XV of the *Liber de causis* is one of the most quoted and, from my point of view, one of the most important. To the six occurrences recorded by Retucci and Meliadò, I would add two other quotations from the

19 Meliadò 2013, p. 506–507.
20 Retucci 2008, p. 155.
21 Meliadò 2013, p. 507.
22 On the influence of proposition XV on Thomas Aquinas see Corrigan, Still 2004, p. 1–15; Putallaz 1991, p. 168–172; Baumgarten 2014, p. 23–47; Scarpelli Cory 2017, p. 185–229.
23 Meliadò 2013, p. 549, n. 178.
24 Libera 1996, p. 127–162, esp. p. 151–162.

commentary on *Exodus*, and one another from the German *Sermon 15*, that I am going to discuss later (see below, p. 363):

1. Tertio notandum quod repetitio, quod bis ait: 'sum qui sum', puritatem affirmationis excluso omni negativo ab ipso deo indicat; rursus ipsius esse quandam in se ipsum et super se ipsum reflexivam conversionem et in se ipso mansionem sive fixionem.[25]
2. Sic ergo 'bonum bonum' significat bonum impermixtum et summum bonum in se ipso fixum, nulli innitens, super se ipsum 'rediens reditione completa'. Sic li 'sum qui sum' impermixtionem esse et eius plenitudinem indicat, ut dictum est supra.[26]

Eckhart quotes proposition XV in full and literally only once, in the commentary on the Gospel of St. John:[27]

> Ergo et deus nusquam proprius, sed nec proprie invenitur aut noscitur nisi in se ipso. Hinc est quod oculus non videt nec noscit se, quia non potest redire supra se. Et in *De causis* dicitur quod 'omnis sciens, qui scit essentiam suam, est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa'.

As Therese Scarpelli recently showed, this proposition is known in two variants, both documented by Thomas Aquinas. The first variant ("Every knower who knows his essence returns to his essence with a complete return"—*Omnis sciens qui scit essentiam suam est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa*) appears in Thomas Aquinas' Commentary on the *Sentences* and in his *Summa*, while the second Variant B ("Every knower knows his essence, therefore he returns to his essence with a complete return"—*Omnis sciens scit essentiam suam, ergo est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa*) appears for the first time in Thomas Aquinas' commentary on *Liber de causis*.[28]

As the passage from the commentary on the Gospel of St. John clearly shows, Eckhart uses only the first variant (*Omnis sciens qui scit essentiam suam est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa*), suggesting that his source is not Thomas Aquinas' commentary on *Liber de causis*. I will return to this point after.

In the other seven instances, Eckhart quotes literally only the formula *reditione completa*, within the account of the features of the substance reverting upon its own essence: "that it is subsistent, stable in itself, not in need of a

25 Meister Eckhart, *In Ex*. n. 16, LW II, p. 21,7.
26 Meister Eckhart, *In Ex*. n. 17, LW II, p. 23,5.
27 Meister Eckhart, *In Ioh*. n. 222, LEW III, p. 186,9–13.
28 Scarpelli Cory 2017, p. 207–214.

support for its stability and its essence, because it is a simple, self-sufficient substance"[29] (*quia es stans, fixa per se, non indigens in sua fixione et sui essentia re alia rigente ipsam, quoniam est substantia simplex, sufficiens per se ipsam*).

As for the contexts in which it is used by Eckhart, proposition XV is cited when dealing with three main subjects: 1) to describe the internal dynamics of the One—mostly in the commentary to Exodus—associated to the concept of *negatio negationis* (self-identity); 2) when introducing one of his most well-known neologisms in vernacular, namely the adjective *istic* and the substantive *Isticheit*, the basis for which seems to be, in fact, the concept of *reditio completa*; 3) with reference to the metaphysics of the intellect (self-determination)

3 *Negatio negationis* and *Isticheit*

There is no mention of Proclus in Eckhart's German *Sermons*. I do not agree with Retucci, who assumed that the *negatio negationis* (the Latin version of *versagens des versaggenes*), which appears in German *Sermon 21*, derives from Proclus' commentary on *Parmenides*,[30] translated by Moerbeke. This is quite unlikely for three reasons.

First of all, in his Prologue to the *Opus Tripartitum*, when explaining the verse *Deus unus est*, Eckhart affirms that this is supported by the authority of Proclus and the *Liber de causis*. Furthermore (*Preterea*)–Eckhart adds—God is *negatio negationis*. Evidently Eckhart doesn't link the *negatio negationis* to Proclus:[31]

> Rursus eodem modo se habet de uno, scilicet quod solus deus proprie aut unum aut unus est, Deut. 6: 'deus unus est'. Ad hoc facit quod Proclus et *Liber de causis* frequenter nomine unius aut unitatis deum exprimunt. Praeterea li unum est negatio negationis. Propter quod soli primo et pleno esse, quale est deus, competit, de quo nihil negari potest, eo quod esse omnia simul praehabeat et includat.

Secondly, the expression *negatio negationis* never appears in Proclus' commentary. Moreover, the expression circulated before Moerbeke's translation, for instance in the works of Henry of Ghent.[32] As Wouter Goris has shown,

29 *Liber de causis*, prop. XV, n. 128, p. 79,65–80, 67–69. English translation by Brand 1984, p. 48.
30 See Retucci 2008, p. 151–154.
31 Meister Eckhart, *Prol. Op. Trip*. n. 6, p. 44.
32 Henricus de Gandavo, *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 25, q. 1, fol. 148rE. The influ-

according to Henry of Ghent the *negatio negationis* serves to admit unity as something posited in the divine. The attribution of unity to God is conceived in terms of something which is added to the existent. The *negatio negationis* forms the explication of an *indivisio* that is predicated of the One as an additional *modus significandi*. In his *Summa*, in response to the objection that 'the One' is employed not as a positive but as a private designation in the Godhead, Henry of Ghent replies by stating that the *negatio negationis* is a *verissima positio*, in a sense very near to the Eckhartian position on the *negatio negationis*.

The third reason is based on the refutation of Retucci's argument, according to which, there are different uses of the notion of *negatio negationis* between Eckhart's Latin and German works:[33]

> In Eckhart vi sono due impieghi ben differenti e circostanziati della negazione della negazione, come già de Libera aveva notato. Fino ad un certo punto, infatti, l'attribuzione negativa dell'uno rimane in Eckhart una teoria dell'uno trascendentale in cui non si possono non ravvisare gli echi della speculazione metafisica di Enrico di Gand, come già Goris ha sottolineato. In tutte le sue esposizioni enologiche, essenzialmente concentrate nella predicazione tedesca, Eckhart supera la prospettiva ontologico-trascendentale dell'opera latina. E ciò avviene, a mio avviso, proprio nella direzione della prima ipotesi del commento al Parmenide di Proclo. Nella predicazione in volgare Dio è negazione della negazione, in quanto Uno trascendente e non in quanto essere.

I do not believe that Eckhart's German output presents a different perspective than his Latin work. Nor do I believe that in his Latin work Eckhart speaks of the One in an ontological-transcendental perspective, whereas in the German work he speaks of the One as transcendent beyond Being.

I start my analysis with a passage from German *Sermon 21*,[34] in which the expression *versagenes des versaggenes* is presented:

> Saint Paul says: 'One God'. One is somehow more pure than goodness and truth. Goodness and truth do not add anything, they add in a thought; when something is thought, it is added. One does not add anything, as He

ence of Henry is noted by Goris 1997, p. 197–206, esp. p. 200; on the provenance of *negatio negationis* see also Hedwig 1980, p. 7–33; Steel 1999, p. 351–368; Beierwaltes 1972, p. 42; Id. 1998, p. 100–129, esp. p. 112–119; Tsopurashvili 2012, p. 200; Enders 2012, p. 366–369.

33 Retucci 2008, p. 155.

34 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 21*, DW I, 363, 7–8. English version by Vinzent 2019, p. 791–793.

> is in Himself, before He emanates into the Son and the Holy Spirit. So He said: 'Friend, lift yourself up.' A master says: One is a negation of negation. If I said: God is good, it would be adding something. One is a negation of negation and a denial of denial. What is the meaning of 'one'? 'One' means that nothing is added to it. The soul takes theGodhead as it is purified in her, where nothing is added, where nothing is thought about. One is a negation of negation. All creatures have a negation in them; 'one' negates being the other. 'One' angel negates being another. But God has a negation of negation; He is one, and negates anything else, because there is nothing except God. All creatures are in God and are of His own Godhead; and this means fullness, as I have already said. He is a Father of the whole godhead. For this reason, I say 'one' Godhead, where no emanation has taken place and nowhere is anything touched or thought about. By denying anything to God—I deny the goodness of God, even though I cannot deny God—, by denying to God, I grasp something of Him that He is not; this must go. God is one, He is a negation of negation.

For it to be correctly understood, this passage needs to be placed in its proper context. Eckhart quotes, as was stated, the words of a master, who declares that the One is negation of negation. Eckhart then explains what he understands by this expression: God is One, and he denies everything else because nothing is outside of God, whereas all things created are in God, and are His very Godhead. Thus, it is not possible to say of God that He is 'not something', as if He were any other creature. God, insomuch as He is One, contains in Him everything and this "means plenitude" (*meinet ein vüllede*), as he has already stated (*als ich ê sprach*). Sturlese claims[35] that this self-reference refers to another passage of *Sermon 21*, in which Eckhart is in fact speaking about God in terms of plenitude. The passage identified by Sturlese is the following:[36]

> God has all things in Himself in fullness; for that reason, He does not seek anything outside of Himself, if not in fullness as it is in God. As God bears it within Himself, no creature can grasp.

As is clear, however, this passage pointed out by Sturlese does not include any reference to the *negatio negationis* as the sign of this plenitude.

35 Sturlese 2014, p. 832, note 13.

36 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon* 21, DW I. English version by Vinzent 2019, p. 789.

But Eckhart has in fact proposed elsewhere the idea that the concept of *negatio negationis* means (*meinet*) a *plenitudo*. I refer to the Commentary on St. John's Gospel:[37]

> In ea, scilicet divina natura, est omnis negationis negatio, consequenter nulla prorsus imperfectio, defectus, sed plenitudo esse, veritas et bonitas.

In the Latin commentary we find then the same concept expressed in *Sermon 21*: the One is the negation of every negation, because in itself it already has everything. There is nothing outside of Him: it is not possible to say that the One, or rather God, is not Goodness, because there is nothing that can be denied of God, insofar as He is One, because He contains already everything in His self. This is then the true sense of the passage in the German *Sermon 21*: when I deny something of God (for instance, I deny of Him Goodness), I understand something about Him, namely, that He is not a determined Goodness. But this (the negation that God is something) must be eliminated. That which must be eliminated, then, is not simply the fact that I understand something (*dâ begrîfe ich etwaz von im*) as Retucci argues,[38] but rather the grasping "at something in Him that He is not". How can I in fact grasp divine plenitude by simply denying attributes? What Eckhart says is that a simple negation must be avoided: insofar as He is One, insofar as He is plenitude, God denies (forbids) negation.[39] If God is plenitude, it is possible neither to deny nor to add anything to Him. It is not possible to deny Him anything because He is, in fact, plenitude.

In *Sermon 21*, then, Eckhart does not present a sense of a transcendent One that is different from that in his Latin work, but simply repeats what was stated many times: regarding God and the divine it is not true, as Pseudo-Dionysius says, that *negationes sunt verae, affirmationes incompactae*:[40]

> 'Omnipotens nomen eius'.
> Ibi habes primo breviter et luculenter quae deus possit et quae aut qualia non possit vel potius dicatur non posse a vulgaribus. Habes etiam ibidem plura de nominibus, quibus deus nominatur in scriptura, a philosophis, a sanctis et doctoribus, et quomodo sola substantia et relatio secundum genus suum admittuntur in divinis, et quomodo affirmationes sunt

37 Meister Eckhart, *In Ioh.* n. 692–693, LW III, p. 608, 10–p. 609, 1.
38 Retucci 2008, p. 151.
39 On this passage see also the interpretation of Beierwaltes 1998, p. 112–113.
40 Meister Eckhart, *In Ex. Tabula Auctoritatum*, DW II, p. 3,1–8.

> propriae in divinis, negationes autem impropriae. Nec obstat verbum Dionysii dicentis quod negationes in divinis sunt verae, affirmationes autem incompactae.

There does not seem then to be any difference between what Eckhart affirms in his Latin and German works. A comparison between *Sermon 21* and Latin works in fact shows a substantial uniformity (similar notions in bold):

***In Sap.* n. 148, 486,2–3**	***Sermon 21* Q**
Iterum etiam **li unum nihil addit** super esse, nec **secundum rationem** quidem, sed secundum solam negationem; **non sic verum et bonum**. (…) Significat enim **li unum** ipsum esse insuper **in se ipso** cum negatione et exclusione omnis nihili, quod, inquam, nihil omnis negatio sapit	**Ein** ist **etwaz** lûterz dan **güete und wârheit**. Güete und wârheit **enlegent niht zuo**, **sie legent zuo in einem gedanke**; **dâ ez bedâht wirt, dâ leget ez zuo**. **Ein enleget niht zuo**, **dâ er in im selber** ist, ê er ûzvlieze in sun und heiligen geist.
***In Sap.* n. 148, 486,**	***Sermon 21* Q**
Omne citra deum, utpote citra esse, est ens et non ens, et **negatur sibi aliquod esse** cum sit sub esse et citra esse, et ideo ipsi congruit negatio.	**Alle crêatûren hânt ein versagen an in selben; einiu versaget, daz si diu ander niht ensî** (…)
***In Ioh.* n. 208, 176,1–5**	***Sermon 21* Q**
‘Deus enim **unus est’**: in uno autem non est magis et minus, sed nec distinctio nec creatum ens hoc et hoc. Rursus nec proprium; unum enim sicut ens commune est omnibus. Adhuc autem in uno, ut **unum est**, non cadit malum, defectus, deformitas, privatio, sed neque **negatio nisi negationis**; **unum enim negat** divisionem et numerum et esse multum.	Aber **got hât ein versagen des versagennes**; **er ist ein** und versaget alle ander, **wan niht** ûzer gote enist.

(*cont.*)

***In Ioh.* n. 692–693, 608–609**	***Sermon 21* Q**
Proprietas divinae naturae increatae est unitas et per consequens immobilitas, immutabilitas et quies; nulla ibi negatio nec per consequens multitudo, quin immo est in ea omnis **negationis negatio**, consequenter nulla prorsus imperfectio, defectus, sed **plenitudo esse**, **veritatis et bonitatis**.	Alle crêatûren sint in gote und sint sîn selbes gotheit und meinet **ein vüllede**, als ich ê sprach.
***In Ioh.* n. 562, 489,8–10**	***Sermon 21* Q**
Propter quod sancti unum sive unitatem in divinis attribuunt primo supposito sive personae, **patri** scilicet.	Er ist ein **vater** aller gotheit.
***In Ex.* n. 77, 80,9–11**	***Sermon 21* Q**
Negationes ergo dictae de deo hoc solum ostendunt quod nihil istorum, quae in rebus extra sunt et quae sensibus apprehenduntur, in deo est. Patet igitur quod affirmatio, utopote ad esse pertinens, propria est Deo et divinorum, in quantum divina sunt. **Negatio autem non est propria, sed aliena a Deo** (…) quia affirmatio esse habet et includit	**In dem daz ich gote versage etwaz**, versage ich gote güete, ich enmac gote niht versagen—**in dem daz ich gote versage, dâ begrîfe ich etwaz von im, daz er niht enist; daz selbe muoz abe**. Got ist ein, er ist ein **versagen des versagennes**.

According to Eckhart, 'One' means 'pure Being' insofar as the One is the negation and exclusion of any 'nothing' that implies a negation. The One is then the highest negation, because it is the Being without negations, or rather Being itself: as Eckhart states in his *Sermon 21*, *da er in im selber ist*. Every negation, in fact, denies any being, and this lack of being is expressed by the word *negatio*. The negation of the negation, then, which is the meaning of the One, tells us that such a concept includes in itself everything that belongs to it and excludes on the other hand that which does not belong to it, namely

non-being. The One to which Eckhart refers is not then the One defined by Proclus, at least not in the sense found in his Commentary on Plato's Parmenides.[41] Eckhart connects in fact the *negatio negationis* with the self-revelation *ego sum qui sum* as a specific representation of the 'One' as *purum esse in se ipso* (which corresponds to the expression *er in im selber ist* in German *Sermon 21*) and as pure self-affirmation on the basis of the authority of the *Liber de causis* as the following passage of the *Commentary on Exodus* suggests:[42]

> Nulla enim propositio propter hoc est verior illa, in qua idem praedicatur de se ipso. Omne citra deum, utpote citra esse, est ens et non ens, et negatur sibi aliquod esse cum sit sub esse et citra esse, et ideo ipsi congruit negatio. Ipsi autem esse non negatur aliquod esse, sicut animali non negatur hoc animal, puta leo. Nulla ergo negatio, nihil negativum deo competit, nisi negatio negationis, quam significat unum negative dictum: "deus unus est," Deut. 6; Gal. 3. Negatio vero negationis purissima et plenissima est affirmatio: "ego sum qui sum." Super se ipsum "redit reditione completa", sibi ipsi innititur, se ipso est, ipsum esse est. Nulla ergo negatio deo congruit: "se ipsum negare non potest," Tim. 2.

Eckhart also calls the intellectual self-positing and self-affirmation of God "negation of the negation," since it is a pure and utterly complete self-affirmation that abolishes all the limitations, and thus every negativity, of the creaturely existent: "I am who I am." Since the truth of an affirmative proposition consists in general in the identity of its terms, the self-affirmation that is the plenitude of pure Being itself is characteristic of God; it is this self-affirmation that utters itself in His name "I am who am". This is why this tautological sentence is the truest of all sentences.

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41 I subscribe therefore to Beierwaltes's position, who claims (Beierwaltes 1965, p. 396): "Während bei Proklos die Negation der Negation in die Aufhebung affirmativer und negativer Dialektik in Glauben und Schweigen führt, ist die *negatio negationis* bei Eckhart Ursprung reiner Affirmation *negatio vero negationis purissima et plenissima est affirmatio*: *ego sum qui sum*. *Negatio negationis* ist also nicht wie bei Proklos der äußerste Akt des sich selbst übersteigenden Denkens, das den nicht-denkenden und nicht zu denkenden Ursprung zu berühren versucht, sondern der Selbstvollzug des reinen Seins als Denken". Vinzent subscribed to the same position in Vinzent 2012, p. 43, n. 139: "Proclos is not affirmative, however, when he writes about the 'indistinctness' of the One or the negation of negation, whereas for Eckhart life, affirmation, creativity and God's 'outgoing' are key".

42 Meister Eckhart, *In Ex*. n. 74, 77,9–78,2.

This self-revelation is therefore not static, but dynamic. For, in this self-reflexive act, God returns with a perfect act of returning to His own self, as Eckhart states in agreement with proposition XV of the *Liber de causis*.

This means that Eckhart uses proposition XV of *Liber de causis* in order to explain the meaning of *negatio negationis*: God, insofar as He is One, is a dynamic identity reverting upon himself, which excludes every negation of himself.

Now, in his German output, Eckhart has coined a specific terminology for indicating this property of the One eternally converted upon itself, that is *Isticheit*, a self-reflecting identity in himself. This neologism appears mostly in contexts in which Eckhart deepens the theory of union between God and human soul and of the intellectual ground of this union as the following two passages document.[43]

The first is a passage in German *Sermon 12*, in which Eckhart describes the rapture of St. Paul in terms of a renunciation of the greatest good, that is God itself ("I renounce God for God's sake"). But at the same moment that Paul renounces to God as a subject opposed to him, he properly remains in God, who is *istic sîn selbes*, that is identical reflection on Himself of Himself. At this level, all determinations must necessarily disappear, even the most general ones. Here, in this state, it is not possible to distinguish between creature and God whom one has already renounced. There is only immutable unity and perfect identity, the One:[44]

> St. Paul left God for God: he left everything that he could get from God, he left everything that God could give him and everything he might receive from God. In leaving these, he left God for God, and then God was left with him, as God 'is an identical reflection on Himself of Himself' (*dâ got istic ist sîn selbes*), not by way of a reception or a gaining of Himself, but rather in an 'identity reverting upon ist own essence' (*denne in einer isticheit*), 'that is where He is in Himself', (*daz got in im selber ist*). He never gave God anything, nor did he receive anything from God: it is a single oneness and a pure union (…) It is one, it has nothing in common with anything, and nothing created has anything in common with it.

43 On this neologism see Beccarisi 2003, p. 328–358.

44 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 12* Q, DW I, p. 197, 2–6. English version by Walshe in Walshe, McGinn 2007, p. 296–297. I've changed the translation slightly by highlighting it with English quotation marks. See also the Foreword to Walshe's translation by McGinn in Walshe, McGinn 2007, p. XVIII.

The second passage is taken from the German *Sermon 77*, in which Eckhart comments on the pronoun "I" (*ich*): God as One, that is as the absolute unity itself, excludes from Himself any negative, that is every non-being according to the form of otherness, He affirms Himself as pure being in itself. Self-affirmation as self-proclamation of the pure being-one must be understood as a self-identity (*isticheit*):[45]

> As regards the other sense: where the text says, 'I', that means in the first place God's self-identity (*isticheit*) the fact that God alone is, for all things are in God and from Him, since outside of Him and without Him nothing truly is: all creatures are worthless and a mere nothing compared with God. Therefore, what they are in truth they are in God, and thus God alone is in truth. And therefore the word 'I' means the self-identity of divine truth, for it is the proof of one is. It thus testifies that He alone is.

This passage matches almost literally the text from the Exodus commentary, analysed above, where we find a clear connection between the One as *negatio negationis*, the metaphysics of *Ego sum qui sum* understood as the purest repetition and affirmation, and proposition XV of the *Liber de causis* expressed in the German output with the term *isticheit*.

In the next part of my contribution I will show how the concept of *conversio* or *reditio* affects Eckhart's thought on self-knowledge and self-determination.

4 The *reditio completa* as Foundation of Self-Determination

I will begin with German *Sermon 9* Q,[46] *Quasi stella matutina*, a very famous sermon in which Eckhart establishes the superiority of the intellect over will and *esse*. The composition of this sermon should be dated to the period of the first Parisian *magisterium* (1301–1302). At the same time, three questions, together with the so-called *Rationes Equardi* held by Eckhart against the Franciscan Gonsalvus of Spain, have been devoted to the subject of the superiority of the intellect. The German sermon takes up several arguments that Eckhart had used in both the questions and the dispute against Gonsalvus. One of them considers the intellect's ability to convert upon itself and to act inwardly:[47]

45 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 77* Q, DW III, p. 339, 1–6. English version by Walshe in Walshe, McGinn 2007, p. 263.

46 This sermon has recently been commented upon by Flasch 2017, p. 1–28.

47 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 9* Q, DW I, p. 157, 8–158, 5. English version by Walshe 2007, p. 345.

> Intellect always works inward. The subtler and more spiritual a thing is, the more strongly it works inwardly; and the stronger and finer the intellect is, the more is that which it knows united with it, the more it becomes one with it. It is not thus with physical things: the stronger they are, the more they work outward. God's blessedness lies in the inward-working of the intellect in which the Word is immanent.

We find the same argument, with almost the same words, in the so-called *Rationes Equardi*:[48]

> Sed intellectus et intelligere maxime est immune a materia, quia tanto aliquid est minus reflexivum quanto materialius. Reflexio autem non est in essendo, sed in intelligendo.

In both texts Eckhart demonstrates the superiority of the intellect as such, not only over the will but also over determinate being. The reason for this superiority is its capacity to "work inwardly," in the Latin text indicated by the term *reflexio* and in the German sermon by the expression *inwert würkende*. The difference between spiritual substance, which can convert to itself, and material substance, which, on the contrary, cannot convert to itself, finds its origin, as we know, in Proclus.[49]

Eckhart's intermediate source, however, is not Proclus, but rather Thomas Aquinas, who in his *Summa contra gentiles* states:[50] *Intellectus autem supra se ipsum agendo* (*würkende*) *reflectitur; intelligit enim seipsum*.

Furthermore in his commentary to the *Liber de causis*, analyzing proposition VII n. 68 (*Et significatio quidem illius est reditio sui super essentiam suam, scilicet quia non exenditur cum re extens*),[51] Thomas mentions two propositions from Proclus in order to describe the reversion of the intellectual substance upon its own essence:[52]

> Et primo prosequitur de incorporeitate sic dicens: 'quod quidem igitur incorporeus sit Intellectus, quae ad se ipsum conversio manifestat', est autem conversio intellectus ad se ipsum in hoc quod seipsum intelligit; 'corporum enim nullum ad se ipsum convertitur'. Et hoc quidem

48 *Rationes Equardi* in Bibliotheca Eckhardiana Manuscripta p. 50, 35–37.
49 On this topic see Steel 2006, p. 230–255.
50 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* II 49 8.
51 *Liber de causis*, prop. VII n. 68, p. 62,81–83.
52 Thomas Aquinas, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 51, 23–29.

> supra probaverat praemittens XV propositionem talem: 'Omne quod ad se ipsum conversivum est, incorporeum est'.

Thomas explicitly links the *conversio* described by Proclus to the *reditio* of the *Liber de causis*, thus establishing a terminological indetermination which we then find in the works of Meister Eckhart. Eckhart himself speaks primarily of *reditio* and *reflexio*, and much less frequently of *conversio*, even in cases where he explicitly quotes Proclus, as the following examples make clear:[53]

> Cum enim videat, est in se tamen invisibilis, utpote non coloratus; item quia alio oculo indigeret; item, quia, cum sit corpus, super se redire non potest, ut Proclus docet.

Though Eckhart mentions Proclus explicitly, the expression *super se redire* derives from the *Liber de causis*, as documented by an analogous passage from the commentary to the Gospel of John:[54]

> Ergo et deus nusquam proprius, sed nec proprie invenitur aut noscitur nisi in se ipso. Hinc est quod oculus non videt nec noscit se, **quia non potest redire** supra se. Et in *De causis* dicitur quod 'omnis sciens, qui scit essentiam suam, est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa'.

Those two examples show that Eckhart, although he explicitly cites Proclus, is implicitly referring to the *Liber de causis* (especially proposition XV), in order to describe the dynamics of the intellect reverting onto itself. From this we can draw two provisional conclusions:

1) The explicit mention of Proclus in the Latin works is not an indication of a direct influence. At least in the cases discussed above, Proclus is always read through the lens of the *Liber de causis* and Thomas Aquinas.
2) This is particulary true for the question concerning the reversion of the intellectual substances onto themselves, a key theme in Eckhartian speculation. As I show presently, a particularly important role is played in this context by proposition XV of the *Liber de causis*, which Eckhart interprets in a very different way than Thomas Aquinas.

In the German *Sermon 15*, *Homo quidam nobilis abijt in regione longiquam*, Eckhart presents, in a rather faithful manner, the Aristotelian theory of the human

53 Meister Eckhart, *Sermo* LIV,2 n. 531, LW IV, p. 448,2.
54 Meister Eckhart, *In Ioh.* n. 222, LW III, p. 186,9.

soul comparing it with his own opinion.[55] Meanwhile, he describes the movement of separate intelligences from and towards God; a theory which, although attributed to Aristotle, shows rather elements of Neoplatonism:[56]

> Now attend carefully to what Aristotle says about the detached spirits in the book called *Metaphysics*. The highest of the masters who ever dealt with natural science speaks of these detached spirits, and says that they are not the form of anything, and that they derive their being by an immediate outpouring from God, and then they flow back in and receive the outpouring immediately from God, above the angels, and they gaze on the naked being of God without distinction. This pure naked being is called by Aristotle a 'something.' That is the highest that Aristotle ever declared concerning natural science, and no master can say greater things unless prompted by the Holy Ghost.

Niklaus Largier explains this passage as follows:[57]

> Das Konzept der reinen abgeschiedenen Geister, d.h. der *substantiae separatae* von denen hier die Rede ist, geht auf neuplatonische Vorstellungen zurück, die an die aristotelische Annahme einer Vielzahl die Himmelkörper bewegender 'Beweger' anschließen, dieses Denkbild aber ontologisch neu formulieren (…). Eckhart identifiziert in den folgen Zeilen die reinen Geister mit den Engeln und folgt damit einer üblichen Tendenz der Scholastik.

Certainly, Largier is right when he explains that the separate spirits of which Eckhart speaks are the intelligences of Neoplatonism, who are often identified with the angels. He is wrong, however, when he claims that in this passage Eckhart equates the intelligences with the angels.

On the contrary, Eckhart explicitly says that these separated spirits are 'above the angels' (*obewendic den engeln*). In consequence, Eckhart is obviously referring to a theory that distinguishes angels from separate substances. I do not claim that this is Eckhart's personal opinion. I merely say that in this passage he describes a very precise cosmological system of intelligences whose being is determined by the movement of flowing out and returning to God.

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55 See Beccarisi 2008, p. 15–16.

56 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 15* Q, DW I. English version by Walshe 2007, p. 272.

57 Largier 1993, I, p. 902.

Propositions 31 and 32 of Proclus' *Elements* would be two likely candidates.[58] But, as we have seen previously, Proclus does not seem to be a direct source for Eckhart. In this case, the reference to God and to the angels suggests that the direct source might be Dietrich of Freiberg.[59] In his work *De intellectu et intellegibili* Dietrich clearly establishes a fourfold order in which intellectual reality stands: at the top of this order is found what Dietrich calls intellects existing through their essence, followed by intelligent spiritual substances that are called angels, then species and finally the individual realities included in species that are known to the mind.[60] Therefore, according to Dietrich intelligences are not angels: angels are created immediately by God (*productio*), whereas intelligences flow from and return essentially to God (*emanatio*).[61] Dietrich attributes the origin of this doctrine to Proclus, who had posited a relation of essential emanation or causation exercised by a prior upon its effect, which "converts in its essence toward that from which it proceeded":[62]

> Proclus etiam dicit 31 propositione libri sui: 'Omne procedens ab aliquo secundum essentiam convertitur ad illud, a quo procedit.' Ubi dicitur in commento 4: 'Ad quod enim primo appetitus, ad hoc et conversio'. Et in commento 32 propositionis dicit: 'Quod enim convertitur omne ad omne copulari festinat et appetit communionem ad ipsum et colligationem ad ipsum.' (…) Secundum hoc igitur substantia, quae est intellectus per essentiam semper in actu, qualis est intellectus, de quo agitur, quia per essentiam intellectualiter procedit a Deo, etiam sua intellectuali operatione, quae est essentia eius, semper convertitur in Deum ita, ut eius emanatio, qua intellectualiter emanat per essentiam a suo principio, sit ipsius in ipsum principium intellectualis conversio. Non enim primo ab ipso procedit et postea alio respectu seu operatione in ipsum convertitur, sed eadem simplici intellectione, quae est essentia eius. In quo etiam differt ipsius talis emanatio et conversio ab emanatione et conversione aliarum rerum, quae secundum unum modum, scilicet quantum ad constitutionem suae substantiae, emanant a suo principio tamquam a causa

58 Proclus, *Elementatio Theologica*, prop. 31, p. 278 and prop. 32, p. 278.

59 See Flasch 1986, p. 125–134, and especially p. 125–127.

60 See https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dietrich-freiberg/#8.

61 Dietrich von Freiberg, *De intellectu et intelligibili* I 12, 144,60–145,62: *Est autem et hoc circa iam dicta tenendum, quod dicti philosophi loquentes de intelligentiis non loquebantur de angelis, de quibus scriptura sacra loquitur, quae loquitur mysteria abscondita a sapientibus et prudentibus et revelat ea parvulis, de angelis, inquam, quorum multa milia omnipotentia creatoris Dei immediate produxit, id est non secundum ordinem emanationis*.

62 Dietrich von Freiberg, *De visione beatifica* I 5 (1). (4), p. 62, 41–45.63,58.

> efficiente, convertuntur autem in idem suum principium tamquam in finem per suas proprias operationes differentes a substantia sua.[63]

In *Sermon* 15 we find then a typical exemple of an Eckhartian mosaic, consisting of more or less explicit references. In the passage analyzed above we can trace references to Aristotle, Proclus, Dietrich, with which Eckhart presents precise cosmological and gnoseological doctrines: (1) the quidditative knowledge of the angels; (2) the Aristotelian system of separated substances; (3) Proclus' hierarchy of intelligences above the angels, which is also shared by Dietrich of Freiberg in his *De visione beatifica* and *De intellectu et intelligibili*.

Against this complex of doctrines attributed in *Sermon* 15 to the authority of Aristotle, Eckhart opposed his own theory of knowledge, exemplified by the metaphor of the noble man.

The noble man is not contented with quidditative knowledge, just as the angels: only the 'One' satisfies him:[64]

> I say, however, that this noble man is not satisfied with the being that the angels cognize without form and depend on without means—he is satisfied with nothing less than the solitary One.

But who is this noble man and what are his characteristics? Eckhart claims:[65]

> A rational man is one who understands himself rationally, and is, in himself, detached from all matter and form. The more he is detached from all things and turned in on himself, the more clearly and rationally he knows all things within himself without turning outward, the more he is a man.

The intellectual experience which man makes of himself, the knowledge of himself and of all things around him, also determine his humanity. It is therefore a self-determination based on an intellectual experience that man makes of himself. It is not determined by external things, but by himself. It is a self-determination as "self-knowledge".

In this inner way, however, man does not discover himself as an individual, but rather as mankind *per se*: for in God he recognizes not only his own belong-

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63 Dietrich von Freiberg, *De visione beatifica* 1.5. 4.6, p. 62,41–63,56.

64 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 15*, DW I, p. 251, 13–15. English version by Walshe in Walshe, McGinn 2007, p. 272–273.

65 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 15*, DW I, p. 250, 6–10. English version by Walshe in Walshe, McGinn 2007, p.

ing to mankind, but humanity itself, as it really is, beyond its individual and particular phenomena.

In *Sermon 15*, therefore, we find the dynamics described in *Sermon* 9: as a non-material and intellectual substance, human mind return upon himself and find in himself the knowledge of himself and all things, just like God.[66]

The autority (the source) is not Proclus, which Eckhart tacitly criticizes, but rather the *Liber de causis*, as one of the characteristics of the nobleman demonstrates, namely 'simplicity', the indivisible, uncompounded and unfragmented wholeness of the Divine:[67]

> Now I say, How can it be that detachment of the understanding comprehends all things within itself without form or image, without turning outward or transforming itself? I say it comes from simplicity, for the more pure and simple a man is of himself in himself, the more simply he will understand all multiplicity in himself, while himself remaining immutable.

Although it was not recognized by the editor Joseph Quint, it seems to me that here Eckhart is referring, in an implicit but clear way, to propositions XV of the *Liber de causis*:[68]

> Omnis sciens qui scit essentiam suam est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa (...) Et non significo per reditionem substantiae ad essentiam suam, nisi quia est **stans fixa per se** (*belibt unwandelber in im selber*) (...) quoniam est substantia **simplex (***ainvaltikait***) sufficiens per seipsam.**

66 Unlike Eckhart for Thomas Aquinas "human self-knowledge is neither perfect nor direct (...) For embodied souls, it would appear from *De veritate* 10.0 and *Summa theologiae* 1.87 that there is no such thing a direct, intuitive self-knowledge. Instead, the mind my be said to know it self in particular by virtue of its self-presence, since the mind is its own principle; but universally, self-knowledge—in the sense of a scientia of the soul—requires a 'careful and suble' enquiry". See Corrigan, Still 2004, p. 4. Scarpelli Cory instead claims that "in choosing v2 in *Super Librum* 15, Aquinas has deliberately chosen a variant of prop. 15 that is at odds with his own theory of self-knowledge". Cf. Scarpelli Cory 2017, p. 218. However, as I previously have shown, Eckhart includes rather variant 1 of proposition 15. I argue that this implies two alternatives: either Eckhart was not aware of other variants for this proposition, or he deliberately chose variant 1. On the ground of the first variant, only the knower, who knows himself, has the property to return to himself and this is precisely the meaning of *Sermon 15*.

67 Meister Eckhart, *Sermon 15* Q, DW I. English version by Walshe in Walshe, McGinn 2007, p. 272.

68 *Liber de causis*, prop. XV 124 and 128, p. 79,50–51. p. 79,65–80,69.

In the *Liber de causis*, "every knower" who knows its own nature, returns upon itself. This *reditio* is possible because the intellectual substance is *simplex* and *sufficiens per se ipsam*. It determines itself by virtue of this *reditio*, which is a fundamental knowledge of itself.

So it seems to me that there can be no doubt that proposition XV of the *Liber de causis* is the implicit source of this important passage from German *Sermon 15*, in which Eckhart states his anthropology as self-determination and self-knowing. For this, however, a much more accurate and literal source can be found.

Commenting the verse *In simplicitate cordis quaerite illum* (*Sap*. 1,1), Eckhart affirms that the root and the foundation of the intellect is simplicity.[69] The editor notes that Eckhart uses the noun *simplicitas* as a synonym for *immaterialitas*, a term that never appears in the Latin works. The editor thus recognizes the intention of the Dominican master, who, according to the law of *reditio* described in the *Liber de causis*, maintains that only the spiritual, immaterial substances have the property of returning to themselves.

But even more clearly than in both *Sermons 9* and *15*, Eckhart quotes the authority of the *Liber de causis* in the *Sapientia* commentary, in order to affirm that the intellect, thanks to its simplicity, *redit super se reditione completa*, and that thanks to this *reditio* the intellect knows itself and all things. The intellect as an intellect has the property of knowing itself through a dynamic of conversion. These dynamics are characteristic of all intellectual substances, God as well as men, and they are described in the terms of the *reditio completa* in connection with the *Liber de causis*. If one compares the two passages—the first from the *Sermon 15*, the second from the *Sapientia* Commentary—it appears that the direct source of the passage of the sermon is the one from the commentary:

> *In Sap*. In simplicitate cordis quaerite illum
> Ubi notandum quod sicut unum et ens convertibiliter se habent, sic simplicitas et intellectualitas. Radix enim prima et ratio intellectualitatis est simplicitas (*Ich sprich es kum von siner ainvaltikait*). Argumentum huius est: Primo quia 'simplex' et ipsum solum redit se toto super se totum (*sin selbes in im selber ist*) 'reditione completa', et propter hoc—ex *De causis*—est sciens se ipsum et omnia per essentiam (*alle manigvaltikait in im selber verstat*)

69 Meister Eckhart, *In Sap*., LW II, n. 5, p. 327,1.

That means that only what is simple *redit super se reditione completa* and therefore knows itself and everything "by its essence" (*per essentiam*). Hence, what is not simple does not know itself and therefore does not return upon itself. This reading of prop. 15 is quite different from that of Thomas Aquinas. Eckhart stresses the importance of simplicity, that is, immateriality, not to demonstrate the ability of the human soul to separate from the body, but as a necessary condition for self-knowledge.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention another case from a text to which recently Markus Vinzent has drawn the attention of researchers. But I will limit myself to one aspect, namely the simplicity of the intellect as a condition for self-knowledge and self-determination.

As is well known, Franz Pfeiffer has published not only Eckhart's German sermons and treatises, but also proverbs attributed to Meister Eckhart, which form the third part of his edition.[70] Pfeiffer printed Spr. 31–48 from a manuscript in Giessen, supposedly lost; it came from the convent of the Premonstratensian nuns at Altenberg, and Pfeiffer dated it to the 14th century (*Anonymus Altenbergensis*). Denifle already saw that this is in part a free translation from Eckhart's *Expositio libri Sapientiae*. Josef Quint discovered almost the same stock of aphorisms in a later manuscript of the 15th century from the former Charterhouse of Buxheim near Memmingen (*Anonymus Buxheimensis*) (Berlin, Ms. germ. fol. 986),[71] an important document, attributed by Loris Sturlese to the circle of the so-called 'Cologne Eckhartists', that is to say, the circle of disciples of Meister Eckhart who put his texts in circulation to defend his image and his philosophy.[72] Studying this manuscript, Josef Koch, one of the editors of Eckhart's Latin works, realized that this collection was, in fact, a fairly accurate and literal translation of parts of the *Sapientia* commentary. Consequently, he incorporated them in the critical apparatus of his edition of the Latin text.

In the meantime, the manuscript used by Pfeiffer reappeared (Wartburg-Stiftung, Ms. 1361–50) and was presented at a symposium held in Erfurt.[73] Markus Vinzent, who is currently studying this supposedly lost witness, has advanced the hypothesis that behind this anonymous compilator not an Eckhartist is hiding, but rather Eckhart himself, who translated and diffused large

70 Meister Eckhart. *Predigten und Traktate*, ed. Franz Pfeiffer (Leipzig: 1857; repr. Aalen: 1962).

71 See Gottschall 2012, p. 535.

72 Sturlese 2007, p. 119–136, esp. p. 132.

73 See Vinzent 2017, p. 109–134; further fragments are preserved in a Munich manuscript (Cgm 5235).

passages of his Wisdom commentary. I will not go into the details of this question, which is still under examination by the specialists.

I would like, however, to comment on a particular passage of this text that supports Vinzent's hypothesis. One of the rare sources that the anonymous translates and cites explicitly, although under the usual formula *die heidenschen meister*, is the *Liber de causis* and, more precisely, proposition XVII. I here compare the text of Wisdom with that of the anonymous, as transcribed by Pfeiffer. The passages in common are set in bold:

ed. Pfeiffer, III, n. 45	***In Sap.*, LW II, n. 156, p. 492**
In der wîsheit buoche sô sprichet der wîse man alsô die êwige wîsheit vermac alliu dinc, dar umbe, wan si einic ist. Hier über so gît meister Eckhart eine rede unde sprichet **sô ein dinc je einveltiger ist, ie kreftiger unde ie sterker ist. Unde diz brüeven wir dabî: wan ein dinc von vil stücken ist ze samene gemachet, des dinges kraft lît alzemale an der stücken**. Als daz hûs gemachet ist von den wenden unde dem fundamente unde von dem dache, hier umbe sô lît alles des hûses kraft an den selben teilen; mer: möhte daz hûs von siner einerkeit haben die kraft, die ez hat von den wenden, so bedörfte ez der wende niht. **Wan nu got ist daz einveltigste guot, daz sin mac und in dem alliu dinc ein sint, hierumbe sô vermac er alliu dinc, wan er ein ist. Unde sprechent ouch die heidenschen meister, daz ein ieglichiu kraft swenne si sich wite zerteilet, so wir si deste bloeder**. Reht also ist ez ouch umbe die vernunft: swenne si sich zerteilet in manicvaldekeit der kreature, so wirt si deste bloeder unde deste krenker gegen gote. Mer: swenne diu vernunft sich lediget von den kreaturen und alle	Sequitur secundum principale, scilicet quomodo ex hoc ipso, quod est una, 'omnia potest'. Nec enim posset, nisi esset una, multo minus posset omnia. **Sciendum ergo quod quanto quid est simplicius et unitius, tanto est potentius et virtuosius, plura potens. Ratio est: omne enim compositum posse suum et virtutem trahit ab aliis ipsum componentibus**. Patet igitur quod posse et virtus sunt composito, inquantum compositum, aliena, ipsis autem simplicibus sunt propria. Et hoc est quod volumus, quod quant quid simplicius, tanto potentius et virtuosius, potens in plura et super plura. Quod autem apud nos compositiora sunt perfectiora, non est contra nos, sed pro nobis. Hoc enim accidit ex eo, non quia compositiora—sic enim sunt posteriora et dependentia—, sed hoc accidit, quia plura sunt simplicia quae ipsum componunt. Quanto autem a pluribus virtus descendit in aliquid, tanto est ipsum virtuosius, plura potens. Resumendo ergo formetur ratio sic breviter: quanto quid unitius, tanto potentius, ut dictum est. **Ergo quod est simpliciter unum—et**

(*cont.*)

sinne zesamen loufent in die vernunft unde da diu vernunft und ouch die sinne sich mit einander vereinent, so wirt di vernunft also kreftic, daz si überwindet got swes si von im begert. Wan swenne der mensche tuot, daz an im ist, sô mac sich got nihtes erwern.	**ipsum solum—potest omnia.** Topicum est enim: si magis ad magis, et simpliciter ad simpliciter. **Sed sapientia est una simpliciter, ut hic dicitur; ergo ipsa potest omnia.** Et hoc est quod hic dicitur: 'cum sit una, omnia potest'. **Praeterea secundo sic ex De causis: 'omnis virtus unita infinitior est', plura et in plura potens. Sed sapientia, quae deus est, est maxime una, utpote prima. Igitur ipsa est simpliciter infinita et omnia potens.**

In this example too, both in the Latin version and in the text in German, simplicity is at the center of the discourse, this time as a condition of the omnipotence of Wisdom, which by virtue of its unity can do everything. Indeed, by implicitly citing proposition XVII, Eckhart affirms that the simpler the thing, the more powerful it is. Therefore, the One, that is, God, which is absolutely simple, can perform all things. Eckhart gives three demonstrations: one comes from Aristotle's *Topics*, the second from the *Liber de causis* and the last one is based on the dynamics of the pair form / act.

Compared to the Latin text, however, the German version adds two important elements. The first is precisely a citation from the *Liber de causis*. While the Latin text relates only the main proposition, the German text cites also the commentary:

> Et illius quidem significatio est virtus divisa et quod ipsa, quanto magis agregatur et unitur, magnificatur et vehementior fit et efficit operationes mirabiles; et quanto magis partitur et dividitur minoratur et debilitatur et efficit operationes viles.

The second element to be noted is a reference to the activity of the intellect, described, as in the German *Sermon 15*, in its double attitude towards things: it is sometimes dispersed in multiplicity, sometimes turned towards itself, united and unique in itself, as God.

The Altenbergensis thus shows three facts. (1) It is the intellect as such, both divine and human, which, thanks to its simplicity, determines itself without any orientation to external things. The anonymous explicitly expresses this

idea: if the intellect is united in itself and is separated from the diversity of the creatures, then it is so powerful that he even surpasses God in his action and forces God who cannot withhold himself (*überwindet got swes is von im begert. Wan swenne der mensche tuot, daz an im ist, sô mac sich got nihtes erwern*). (2) The interpretation of the *Liber de causis* which translates the Wisdom Commentary while at the same time taking it further by being close to German *Sermon 15* is hardly a work of an Eckhartist, but displays the systematic thinking of Eckhart himself. (3) That is why we can speak of Eckhart's own theory of self-determination which is developed here, clearly influenced by the *Liber de causis*, especially by the propositions in which the *reditio* of the intellect is described.

5 Conclusions

We can thus draw the following conclusions:

1) Proclus had, for Eckhart, an importance certainly inferior to that which some scholars have attributed to him. In any case, this importance is inferior to that which Proclus has had for Tauler or Berthold von Moosburg. Alain de Libera[74] seems right when he affirms that we read Eckhart after equations and identifications produced not by him, but by Tauler or Berthold von Moosburg. We are asking Eckhart the very same questions already posed to him by Tauler and Berthold.
2) A second conclusion concerns the difference between Scholasticism and mysticism, between the ontology of Latin texts and the Henology of the texts in the vernacular. The cases that I have presented as examples tend to show an influence not only thematically, but also textuallly, between Eckhart's academic, homiletic and lecturing outputs. The difference is not in their content, but rather in tone, in the use of examples, in the freedom with which Eckhart handles his sources.
3) This in turn leads us to the third conclusion: we should not exclude, as certain examples already pointed out show, that Eckhart himself translated part of his Latin work into German, reshaping, broadening or specifying some sources used in his academic output. The case of *Sermon 15* might confirm Markus Vinzent's thesis, according to which the author of the translation of passages from the *Sapientia* commentary (the so called *Anonymus Altenbergensis*) was Eckhart himself.

74 Libera 1996, p. 20.

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CHAPTER 16

The *Liber de causis* and the *potentia sive virtus intellectiva* Formula in Dante's Political Philosophy

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In the *Monarchia* and the *Convivio*, Dante explains that human beings are the only entity situated between corruptibility and incorruptibility. Created as a union of soul and body, human beings are, in fact, endowed with a dual nature. With respect to the human condition, i.e. their bipartite essence, each person may be conceived of as both perishable and, on the count of the soul, not perishable, at the same time.[1] Parting from this dual nature, the Italian poet establishes how humanity as a whole could achieve its proper and distinctive end: earthly happiness. This ethical aim hinges on a specific and higher capacity, which Dante describes as a *potentia* or *virtus intellectiva*. In fact, humanity as a whole could achieve its end by exercising its proper function, which is to actualize the *potentia intellectiva* entirely, simultaneously, and continually (*actuetur vis ultima tota simul semper*).[2] According to him, this would be possible if humanity correctly ordered temporal affairs under a sole Monarch. And this is, clearly, the political aspect of Dante's thought. Dante presupposes a particular connection between the people and the government—one that differs from other social interrelations.

The subject of this study is to analyze some of the passages of Dante's political work in the *Convivio* and the *Monarchia*, taking detailed account of the notions of *potentia* and *virtus* and the way they operate in these political treatises. Because the author uses the *ultima potentia* formula to characterize the specific human *virtus*, and because this formula also appears in the *Liber de causis*, I will consider how this anonymous text was received in the Latin West and influenced the rise of political theories in the Middle Ages. In fact, I believe that Dante's quotations of the *Liber* resulted from new philosophical and metaphysical instruments that allowed him to construct a rational argument and

1 Cfr. *Monarchia* L. III, c. 15, 3–6; *Convivio* L. III, c. 7, 5 and L. IV, c. 21, 4–6.

2 For the formula *tota simul* cfr. *Monarchia* L. I, c. 3, 8–10 and in *Monarchia* L. I, c. 4, 1–2 the expression *semper* is used.

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thus to develop his political thought.[3] In this respect, the meaning and connotation of the concepts of *potentia* and *virtus* must be clarified. This is so because, on the one hand, these concepts signify an intellectual capacity or strength which is distinctive of human beings. Dante claims that there is a proper capacity of the human soul intended as an immanent strength, therefore, there is a connection with the rise of political theory in the Middle Ages. Certainly, as politics would ultimately concern the development of a specific human capacity, Dante's claim is part of the construction of a "new" scientific field, the object of which are temporal and human matters. On the other hand, Dante's use of these concepts expresses the *potentia* or *virtus* as a power that flows through the gradual structure of reality formed by primary and secondary causes. In this sense, the idea of *potentiality* and its metaphysical richness seems to be the theoretical support of a political application in the temporal and human field. In fact, under the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition, represented by Proclus and the *Liber de causis*, causes are conceived of as substances that have the capacity to shape reality and to trickle their power or strength down to the lower levels of reality.

As previously mentioned, the notion of *potentiality* in Dante's political works signifies a capacity or strength that represents human perfection. Thus, it has active meaning because it indicates the exercise of a specific capacity. In this respect, it is worth noting that Aristotle used the concept of δύναμις to explain the state of a substance that is not actuality, i.e. a state which has not reached its perfection. To become what it really is, it needs the agency of a substance, which is already actuality. Therefore, according to Aristotle, the perfection of a substance is connected to its actualization.[4] On the contrary, according to Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, the potentiality of a substance is a power; thus, it is a capacity and a perfection. Proclus reversed Aristotle's doctrine because, in his view, the related concepts are *potentiality* and *perfection*.[5] As this last meaning

3 Cfr. *Monarchia* L. I, c. 3, 1–3 where the concept of *inquisitio* describes an investigation based on rational principles.

4 Proclus reworked Aristotle's distinction between an active and passive potentiality. Cfr. *Metaphysics* IX 1046a 5, 10–15: "We have made it plain elsewhere that 'potentiality' and 'can' have several senses [...] One kind of potentiality is the power of being affected; the principle in the patient itself which initiates a passive change in it by the action of some other thing, or of itself qua other. Another is a positive state of impassivity in respect of deterioration or destruction by something else or by itself qua something else [...]." (all English translations are mine, unless otherwise stated) Cfr. also Aristotle, *Metaphysics* V 1019a. See Gersh 1978, p. 27–45.

5 Moerbeke translated the Greek term δύναμις for the Latin *potentia* and ἐνέργεια for *actus* or *operatio*. He chose the word *perfectio* for the Proclean expression τὸ τέλειον which is clearly

of *potentiality* subsists in the *Liber de causis*, which is a source of Dante's political work, the notions of *potentia* or *virtus* in his political theory is one, albeit indirect, reception of Proclus' heritage in the 13th and 14th centuries.

1 *Potentia sive virtus intellectiva* as an Ultimate Capacity of the Human Soul in the *Convivio* and the *Monarchia*

During the second half of the 20th century, scholars debated the impact of the Aristotelian concept of *nature* on the development of political thought in the Late Middle Ages. Some medieval scholars deemed the reception of Aristotle's philosophical work as the main and practically sole reason for the production of political textbooks in the West between the 13th and 14th centuries. Others, instead, noted that there was a previous philosophical ground on which Aristotle's texts were received. Thus, according to them, the influence of different philosophical traditions must be taken into account, such as Neoplatonism or Ciceronian thought, in the rise of Politics as a science.[6] Still, it was widely assumed that political thought in the Middle Ages parts from new considerations of human nature that are offered by an anthropological model that puts forth a particular metaphysics of the soul and the human mind. To be precise, according to Dante, humanity can be differentiated from other species by means of an intellectual capacity or strength. Since the expression *potentia sive virtus intellectiva* concerns an essential characteristic of human nature, even if

related to the Aristotle's notion of entelechy. Since Proclus conceived the capacity to produce or cause an effect in connection with the potentiality of a substance, the schema acquires the following gradual structure: the first principle possesses a perfect and complete potentiality (*plenum et perfectum*) and produces by superfluity or surplus of potentiality. The Henads are characterized as *autopotentia* and that means that their power coincides with their actuality or perfection. Their action takes place from themselves to themselves and they don't need to act on a substrate (*causa causatum*). Next, following that grade, there are different groups or totalities that may be caused by a) causes anterior or preexisting to the parts of a substance (*ante partes*), b) causes that exist simultaneously in all the substance's parts (*ex partibus*) or c) causes that exist in each part of the substance (*in parte*). Cfr. Boese 1987. Dodds speaks of "superfluity of potency," cfr. Dodds 1963, p. 31. Also Gersh 1978, p. 50–51. For the formula "sovrabbondanza di potenza," cfr. D'Ancona 1986, p. 23.

6 A description of the debate in Bertelloni, Francisco 2000, p. 9–39. Walter Ullmann argued for Aristotle's *libri morales* as the principal explanation of the rise of politics during the 13th and 14th centuries in the West. Cfr. Ullmann 1961. On the contrary, Cary Nederman emphasized the role of the Ciceronian philosophical tradition. Cfr. Nederman 1996, p. 563–585. On p. 571 he claimed that the use of Aristotelianism was as a language and not as a doctrine and quoted Black 1992. See also Nederman 1991, p. 179–195, particularly p. 179 where he discussed Ullmann's, Kristeller's and Wilks' considerations. Cfr. also Nederman 1988, p. 3–26.

the concept of *nature* refers to a physical domain, it also denotes a specific and immutable essence that operates and gravitates toward its own proper good. In fact, in Dante's political work that operation is possible because an "ultimate capacity" exists. In the *Monarchia*, Book I, chapter 3, the Italian poet says:

> Que autem sit illa [operatio], manifestum fiet si ultimum de potentia totius humanitatis appareat.[7]

The distinctive capacity that may be exercised by humanity entirely, simultaneously and continually, is an intellectual strength:

> Patet igitur quod ultimum de potentia ipsius humanitatis est potentia sive virtus intellectiva.[8]

In the second chapter, third treatise of the *Convivio*, Dante also asserts that the "place" of the *potenza ultima* is the human soul; thus, he is clearly speaking about a rational capacity:

> E quella anima che tutte queste potenze comprende, e perfettissima di tutte l'altre, è l'anima umana, la quale con la nobilitade de la potenza ultima, cioè ragione, participa de la divina natura a guisa di sempiterna intelligenzia.[9]

On the one hand, some of the translations of the *ultimum de potentia* formula refer to a specific capacity. For example, the word *ultimum*, in relation to an "intellectual potentiality," was translated by Vinay from Latin into Italian as *specifica* and Bertelloni translated the term into Spanish as *propia*. In English, Aurelia Henry uses the expression *distinctive* in her 1904 translation, and more recently Richard Kay used the term *highest* in his version.[10] Both Vinay and

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7 *Monarchia* L. I, c. 3, 4–5: "What this function is, will be evident if we point out the distinctive capacity of humanity as a whole." Richard Kay translates *ultimum de potentia* as "highest power." (transl. Henry) See *infra*, footnote 11.

8 *Monarchia* L. I, c. 3, 6–7: "It is evident, therefore, that the differentiating characteristic of humanity is a distinctive capacity or power of intellect." (transl. Henry) Cfr. also *Monarchia* I, 3, 8–9; *Monarchia*, I, 4, 1–2.

9 *Convivio* III, c. 2: "The soul that comprehends all these powers, and the one that is the most perfect of them all, is the human soul, which by the nobility of its highest power (that is, reason) participates in the divine nature as an everlasting intelligence." (transl. Lansing)

10 Cfr. *supra* the passage in which the expression *ultimum de potentia* is found, *Monarchia* L.

Bertelloni's translations of *potentia* indicate that it is an active function of the human mind. For his part, Vinay translated *potentia* into Italian as *capacità* and Bertelloni chose *operación* for the Spanish version. Like scholars from Italy and Argentina, A. Henry and R. Kay also stressed the active sense of the notion of *potentia*, the former translating it as *capacity* and the latter as *power*. On the other hand, Pier Giorgio Ricci, who published the critical edition of the *Monarchia*, remained silent regarding the term *ultimum* in connection with *potentia*. Nevertheless, he certainly provided remarks for the concept of *fine ultimo* that appears in the *Monarchia* I, 3 just before the *ultimum de potentia* formula. In fact, he explains that *fine ultimo* means "a maximum good". Vianello equally proposed a translation that emphasizes the same aspects of the words *ultimum* and *potentia*, indicating that their meaning is *l'estremo limite della potenza dell'umanità stessa*, which points to the idea of maximum or superior. Furthermore, Vianello justified his translation with a quote from Albert the Great's *De celo et mundo* on the meaning of the term *virtus*. Additionally, Albert's definition of *virtus* is noteworthy in that it includes the expressions *ultimum* and *potentia*:

> Si ergo volumus diffinire virtutem, cum sciamus virtutem consistere in ultimo et maximo, ad quod se extendit virtus activa, dicemus, quod virtus est ultimum, quod est in re potente de potentia sua activa, sicut ultimum potentiae fortitudinis Herculis diximus esse vincere triginta. Quantitas ergo potentiae extensa ad triginta erit virtus Herculis.[11]

Virtus as the ultimate limit of the capacity or strength of an entity can surely be connected to those passages of the *Monarchia* and the *Convivio* in which Dante used the notions of *potentia*, *virtus* and *ultimum* to express the intellectual capacity that has to be exercised by humanity as a *totalitas*. Indeed, Dante equates the concepts of *potentia* and *virtus* (*potentia sive virtus*) because he can define *potentia* as an active power, which is the proper capacity of

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I, c. 3. Translations: Vinay 1950; Bertelloni 1984; Ricci 1965; Vianello 1921; Henry 1904; Kay 1998. Kay's version offers other possible English translations and meanings of the formula *ultimum de potentia* on p. 14, n. 10.

11 Albert the Great, *De caelo et mundo*, I, tr. 4, c. 5, p. 88: "Thus, if we wish to define 'virtue', knowing that it consists of the ultimate and highest peak an active potentiality can reach, we would say that, like active potentiality, virtue is the ultimate limit of a thing's capacity. As we have said, the ultimate limit of the capacity of Hercules' strength is to defeat thirty men. Consequently, Hercules' virtue is the quantity of potency extended to defeating thirty men."

human beings and which can shape reality.[12] In addition, since that capacity is *ultimum*, it represents the ultimate limit of the human mind.

2 The *ultima potentia* Formula in the *Liber de causis*

Although the author of the *Liber de causis* redefined some crucial ideas from his Proclean source *Stoikheíosis theologiké*, the anonymous treatise holds that an indivisible and eternal substance must possess an active potentiality, meaning a certain capacity or power to produce an effect.[13] As stated in proposition V (VI), 64–65 of the *Liber de causis*, Intelligence is an indivisible and immutable substance.[14] In proposition IV, 37 the author also affirms that the first of things created is being; and then he holds that all that follows the First Cause is *intelligentia, completa et ultima in potentia et reliquis bonitatibus*.[15] The First Cause is, strictly speaking, the only hypostasis that can create (by *modus creationis*) and Intelligence is the first thing that is created.[16] The author of the treatise establishes that the latter obtains its *esse* from the former, meaning that it depends ontologically on the First Cause. In that sense, Intelligence is determined by a limit, which is its form,[17] but it is also self-sufficient in relation to its capacity or productive strength, that is, its *potentia* or *virtus*. In the *Liber de causis*, Intelligence is considered as *ultima potentia* because it is *sufficiens per se ipsam*.[18]

12 Moerbeke expressed the idea of a *virtus factiva* in his translation of the *Stoikheíosis theologiké*, Cfr. prop. 7: *Si autem ipsum productivuum est potentie omnis ei quod post ipsum, et si se ipso possit facere tale quale illud: si autem hoc, et facere utique se ipsum potentius. Neque enim id quod est non posse prohibet, presente factiva virtute*. Cfr. Boese 1987, prop. 7.

13 This term can be found in the *Liber de causis* from proposition I, 14 with the verb *efficit*. The term always implies an action, an operation or an influence upon an effect. Specifically, from proposition III and on, the expression *efficiens* is always related to the idea of a *productive capacity*. The *virtus efficiens* formula is in proposition XII (XIII), 121. Cfr. Pattin 1966. Recent philological and historical findings as well as important philosophical analyses in Calma 2016, p. 11–51.

14 *Liber de causis*, prop. VI (VII), 64: Intelligence is an indivisible substance. 65: This is because if it is without magnitude and is not a body and does not move, then without doubt it is indivisible.

15 *Liber de causis*, prop. IV (43): "Intelligence, complete and ultimate in power and the other perfections". (transl. Brand)

16 Propositions in which Intelligence is identified with the first of the things created: Prop. XV (130) *ens primum creatum, scilicet intelligentia*. See also prop. VI (70) and prop. XXII (173).

17 Cfr. *Liber de causis*, prop. VIII (90).

18 *Liber de causis*, prop. XXI (167). See also prop. XIV (124–128). The potentiality of Intelligence (as the other perfections) comes from the First Cause but its operation, that is its capacity for causing, belongs to Intelligence properly.

Therefore, it constitutes a superior principle of a range of effects that descend from the more universal to the more particular. The author of the *Liber de causis* also claims that Intelligence is the complete / perfect reality *apud nos*;[19] and, because of its similarity with the First Cause, it is also described as a prince. This hypostasis, indeed, operates as an intermediary because it connects two spheres: on one side, that which contains things that are inferior to Intelligence and, on the other side, the First Cause:

> Intelligentia est princeps rerum quae sunt sub ea et retinens eas et regens eas, sicut natura regit res quae sunt sub ea per virtutem intelligentiae. Et similiter intelligentia regit naturam per virtutem divinam.[20]

Like its Proclean source, the propositions of the *Liber de causis* do not simply represent a logical sequence, but also stand for an ontological order that is gradually structured. Through the expression *ultimum de potentia*, Dante indicates a superior capacity of the soul.[21] In the *Convivio* III, he quotes the *Liber de causis* to explain the ontological hierarchy not only in respect to universe, but also in connection with the human soul:

> E però che nel'ordine intellettuale de l'universo si sale e discende per gradi quasi continui da la infima forma a l'altissima [e da l'altissima] a la infima, sì come vedemo nel'ordine sensibile. [...] E avvegna che posti siano qui gradi generali [i.e. related to the order of reality], non dimeno si possono porre gradi singulari; cioè che quella [i.e. Divine Goodness / the influence of the First Cause] riceve, de l'anime umane, altrimenti una che un' altra.[22]

As Dante expressed in the *Convivio*, even if God, i.e. an absolute simple principle, influences the whole of creation, not all things created can receive His

19 *Liber de causis*, prop. XXI (167).

20 *Liber de causis*, prop. VIII (82): "Therefore, Intelligence is the sovereign over the things that are under it; and it maintains them and governs them, just as Nature governs the things that are under it by virtue of the power of Intelligence. And similarly, Intelligence governs Nature by virtue of the divine power." (transl. Brand)

21 The rational capacity which is superior to the vegetative and sensitive potencies.

22 *Convivio* III, cap. 7: "Although only the general gradations are set down here, we could nevertheless set down the particular gradations: that is, that among human souls one receives goodness differently from another. And, because in the intellectual order of the universe, one ascends and descends throught continuous gradations from the lowest form to the highest and from the highest to the lowest, as it happens in the sensible order". (transl. Lansing) Cfr. also Nardi 1949, p. 187–188; Raffi 2004, p. 30–48.

goodness equally. In other words, even if the First Cause created the totality of humanity with a unique influx, each entity receives that influence according to its *modus suae potentiae*. That is the formula that the author of the *Liber de causis* uses to explain the existing diversity with respect to the capacity or strength of different entities.

3 From the Capacity or Strength of the Human Soul to the Power of the Monarchy

I've attempted to present the functionality of the concepts of *potentia* and *virtus* according to what may be called "the metaphysics of the human soul and mind". These notions express, in Dante's works, the highest peak that the capacity or strength of the human intellect can reach. To do so is to achieve humanity's proper end, that is, to actualize the potentiality of the human race. In this sense, it is clear that politics, intended as a specific relation between the community and the Monarch—who guides humanity toward the achievement of that end—stems from the exercise of that intellectual capacity.

To further develop this political aspect of the notion of potentiality, two concepts are worth noting in Books I and III of the *Monarchia*. Those concepts are *ordinatio* and *reductio*. Dante uses them to describe some specific modes of causality. On the one hand, since the Monarch "is the most universal cause of men living well",[23] the idea of *ordinatio* in Book I indicates that there exists an alignment of the effects towards the cause *ratione finis*. This order of gradation results from the capacity or strength of the effect, that is, its *modus potentiae*. On the other hand, the idea of *reductio*, developed in Book III, shows that the emperor's authority depends directly on God, who, strictly speaking, is the only cause that can create. As we have seen in the passage of the *Convivio* III, Dante describes the gradual ontological order of reality. This overview may also illuminate the passage of Book I, chapter 11 of the *Monarchia* in which the distance that the Monarch and the other princes keep from subjects differs:

> Sed homines propinquius Monarche sunt quam aliis principibus [...] principibus aliis homines non appropinquant nisi in parte, Monarche vero secundum totum. Et rursus: principibus aliis appropinquant per Monarcham et non e converso.[24]

23 *Monarchia*, L. I, c. 11, 18.

24 *Monarchia*, L. I, c. 11, 15–17: "Men are closer to the Monarch than they are to other princes [...] men are closer to other princes in part, but to the monarch in full. And again, men approach other princes through the Monarch, and not conversely." (transl. Henry)

In the *Monarchia*, the idea of proximity shows the real distance between the grades of an ordered reality. To function, causation requires, as an essential characteristic of the system, this stated distance between causes and effects because that also concerns the higher or lesser similarity between them. In addition, according to this Neoplatonic model of causality, the universality of a cause implies a greater capacity for generating effects.

In Book I, chapter 11, Dante quotes the *Liber de causis* to provide a metaphysical legitimation of a political order in which the emperor is identified with a First Cause that acts in the realm of time:

> Quanto causa est universalior, tanto magis habet rationem cause, quia inferior non est causa nisi per superiores, ut patet ex hiis que De causis [...] Cum ergo Monarca sit universalissima causa inter mortalis ut homines bene vivant quia principes alii per illum, ut dictum est, consequens est quod bonum hominum ab eo maxime diligatur.[25]

The ontological support of the political bond between the princes and the people is based on the existence of the Monarch, who is characterized as a First Cause in the domain of temporal and human matters. Therefore, according to Dante, the monarchy may be conceive as an autonomous political institution.[26] Certainly, it is not a a sum of individualities as a progression from the smaller communities towards the empire.[27] On the contrary, it is the monarchy that orders all the levels of reality to the ultimate end and assures the causal connection between intermediaries and effects. To be precise, if somehow people's well-being depends on princes, it is because the emperor transmits to them his *potentia* or *virtus*, that is to say, that the power and the authority of princes derives from the Monarch's capacity and strength.

> Et sic per prius et inmediate Monarche inest cura de omnibus, aliis autem principibus per Monarcham, eo quod cura ipsorum a cura illa suprema descendit.[28]

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25 *Monarchia* L. I, 11, 17–18: "Moreover, the more universal thecause, the more it possess the nature of a cause, for the lower cause is so merely by virtue of the higher, as can be inferred from the treatise on Causes [...]. As we have said, other princes are causes merely by virtue of the Monarch; then, among mortals, he is the most universal cause of man's well-being, and it is he who loves mankind's well-being above all others." (transl. Henry)

26 Cfr. *Liber de causis*, prop. XXI (167) the concept is *sufficiens per se ipsam*.

27 Empire and Monarchy are synonyms. Cfr. *Monarchia* L. I, 2, 3: *Est ergo temporalis Monarchia, quam dicunt Imperium*.

28 Cfr. *Monarchia*, L. I, 11, 16–17: "Thus the Monarch is the direct and primary guardian of it

The quote from *Liber de causis* in chapter 11 clearly indicates that the causal model is taken from proposition 1 of the anonymous treatise. Dante assigns to God the characteristics of the remote cause and to the Monarch those of the proximate cause. Thus, he argues in favor of an *ontological distance*. In that way, he can articulate his argument showing the similarity between humankind and God if the former is united as whole, that is, if monarchy exists to govern on temporal matters, so that the Monarch can guide the people to their proper end.

> Et omne illud bene se habet et optime quod se habet secundum intentionem primi agentis, qui Deus est [...] De intentione Dei est ut omne causatum divinam similitudinem representet in quantum propria natura recipere potest [...] Ergo humanum genus bene se habet et optime quando secundum quod potest Deo assimilatur. Sed genus humanum maxime Deo assimilatur quando maxime est unum, vera enim ratio unius in solo illo est.[29]

The order *ratione finis* grounded on the Monarchy is necessarily also the starting point of reality. This is so because the Emperor—who is one—constitutes the cause of humanity's unity inasmuch as the latter resembles the former. Indeed, Dante claims that:

> Genus humanum maxime est unum quando totum unitur in uno, quod esse non potest nisi quando uni principi totaliter subiacet.[30]

Thus, *similarity*, *unity* and *proximity* render the theoretical support for Dante's political position, that is, that humanity may be ordered to unity, converting

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all, while the other princes operate through him because the monarch's supreme interest descends through them." (transl. Henry)

29 *Monarchia* L. 1, c. 8, 1–4: "And everything is well, nay, best disposed which acts in accordance with the intention of the first agent, who is God. [...] It is of the intention of God that all things should represent the divine likeness insofar as their peculiar nature is able to recieve it. The human race, therefore, is ordered well, nay is ordered for the best, when according to the utmost of its power it becomes like unto God. But the human race is most like unto God when it is most one, for the principle of unity dwells in Him alone." (transl. Henry)

30 *Monarchia* L. 1, 8, 4–5: "The human race is most one when all are united together, a state which is manifestly impossible unless humanity as a whole becomes subject to one Prince [and consequently comes most into accordance with that divine intention which we showed at the beginning of this chapter is the good]." (transl. Henry)

towards a *totalitas*, to attain its distinctive end. That is only attainable with the Monarch as guide.[31] God is a remote cause of humanity considered as a whole, because he created it directly, endows it with being (*esse*), and governs it through the Monarch who received its authority from Him *inmediate*.[32] In that way, the causal chain in the temporal sphere begins with the Monarch. The Monarch is a cause possessing a kind of autonomy to exercise his own function (*operatio*), for he receives that capacity or strength (*virtus*) by the influence of the First Cause directly. Therefore, he governs that which is beneath him. Indeed, certain propositions of the *Liber de causis* stress the function of Intelligence as an intermediary between God and what follows Intelligence.

At this point, there is another aspect that concerns the political projection of the *potentia sive virtus intellective* formula. All the argumentation of the first Book of the *Monarchia* concerns an active aspect of intellectual capacity or strength. Consequently, it allows Dante to pass over the fallen nature of humanity and avoid the use of the *ratione peccati* formula to legitimate the monarchy's existence.[33] Certainly, for Dante, the *potentia intellectiva* is the maximum of an intrinsic capacity. It is distinctive of human nature and conformed to attain earthly happiness, understood as the perfection of men in temporal life. Thus, the need of the Monarchy or Empire is clearly not justified by the *infirmitas* of human nature.

Nevertheless, in the third Book of the *Monarchia*, Dante endorsed the *ratione peccati* in the allegory of the sun and the moon, a well-known argument used also by the defenders of the papal supremacy over the temporal government. According to this allegory, the two celestial bodies represent two different powers, the temporal and the spiritual. The correct interpretation of the allegory is that, just as the moon receives its light from the sun, so also the tem-

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31 According to "political Augustinianism" the temporal government is legitimated on an anthropological view that considers human nature as fallen (*genus origine depravata, velut radice corrupta*). According to Dante, the emergence of the Monarchy is not due to the fallen nature of the human being. Instead, Monarchy is the institution that allows humanity to reach its proper end (*beatitudo*) because it is the condition for the development of the *ultima potentia tota, simul, semper*. For "political Augustinianism" see Arquillière 1934.

32 Dante poses the problem at the beginning of Book I: *Monarchia* L. I, 2, 3–4: *tria dubitata queruntur* [...] *tertio an auctoritas Monarche dependeat a Deo inmediate vel ab alio, Dei ministro seu vicario* and he gives an answer in *Monarchia* L. III, 15, 15–16: *Sic ergo patet quod auctoritas temporalis Monarche sine ullo medio in ipsum de Fonte universalis auctoritatis descendit*.

33 Cfr. Augustine, *Contra Iulianum* L. III, 12. 24: *Natura vero humana secundum catholicam fidem bona instituta, sed vitiata peccato meritoque damnata est*. L. IV, 2.11 Sic *virtus in infirmitate perficitur: quia et pugnare infirmitatis est*.

poral government obtains its authority from the spiritual. To refute this interpretation, Dante held that the Church and the Empire are two *remedia contra infirmitatem peccati*.[34] However, his understanding has an opposite starting point. As Dante explains regarding the moon:

> Dico ergo quod licet luna non habeat lucem abundanter nisi ut a sole recipit, non propter hoc sequitur quod ipsa luna sit a sole. Unde sciendum quod aliud est esse ipsius lune, aliud virtus eius, et aliud operari. Quantum est ad esse, nullo modo luna dependet a sole, necetiam quantum ad virtutem, nec quantum ad operationem simpliciter.[35]

However, the moon does not depend on the sun for its being (*esse*) or its capacity (*virtus*). Nor does it depend absolutely on the sun for its operation because the cause of its movement and the influence that it exercises over things belong to it properly. Dante replaces the moon and the sun with the temporal and spiritual rulers and establishes that:

> Sic ergo dico quod regnum temporale non recipit esse a spirituali, nec virtutem que est eius auctoritas, nec etiam operationem simpliciter.[36]

Temporal power, indeed, does not receive its being and authority from spiritual power but instead obtains it directly from God, i.e. without intermediaries. In fact, according to Dante, the expression *virtus* applies to the temporal government and to the Monarch's *auctoritas*. Hence, it refers to the power or capacity of the Monarch to act independently or autonomously from the authority of the spiritual ruler.

In short, Dante's *ratione peccati* argument does not affirm an intrinsic corruption of human nature which would entail a *reductio* of one power into another, that is, a subordination of the temporal government to the spiritual.

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34 Cfr. *Monarchia* L. III, c. 4, 14–15.

35 *Monarchia* L. III, 4, 18–19: "I say, then, that although the Moon may have abundant light only as she receives it from the Sun, it does not follow on that account that the Moon herself owes her existence to the Sun. It must be recognized that the essence of the Moon, her strength, and her function are not one and the same. Neither in her essence, her strength, nor her function taken absolutely, does the Moon owe her existence to the sun, [for her movement is impelled by her own motor and her influence by her own rays]." (transl. Henry)

36 *Monarchia* L. III, 4, 20–21: "In like manner, I say, the temporal power receives from the spiritual neither its existence, nor its strength, which is its authority, nor even its function taken absolutely." (transl. Henry)

On the contrary, the argument instead relies on the fact that both powers are created by God and, consequently, have proper authority and a distinctive end from each other.

4 Some Conclusions

In connection with the *potentia sive virtus intellectiva* formula used by Dante in his political treatises, several remarks are in order. First, in Book I, these notions are employed to affirm the entity of temporal government as it is based on the existence of an ultimate end. This end can be reached by exercising a distinctive capacity or strength. This capacity or strength, though unique to each individual human being, has to be actualized by humanity as a whole. That is only possible under the guidance of the Monarch.

Second, in Book III, these concepts enabled Dante to use philosophical arguments to defend the autonomy of the temporal government in relation to the spiritual. In other words, it enabled him to stand for a relative independence of the monarchy regarding the papacy. Thus, I sustain that the indirect influence of Proclean philosophy through the *Liber de causis* is manifested in some parts of Dante's political work that may be assigned to the relations between cause and effects as they are established under the Neoplatonic model. Notably: a) that the ontological order has a gradual structure according to which reality proceeds from the absolute simple towards the complex and returns through the same instances or levels; b) given this order between those instances, named causes and effects, there is an ontological distance that allows a greater or lesser similarity of the effect to its cause; c) on the basis of that distance, it is also possible to describe reality in terms of remote or proximate causes; d) *participation by similarity* and *ontological distance* are concepts also related to the capacity of a cause (*potentia* or *virtus factiva*).

In addition, according to the author of the *Liber de causis*, the concept of *potency* acquires a particular meaning when applied to Intelligence. In fact, in that text, it is described as *ultima potentia*, expressing its condition as an intermediary between the First Cause and the created order as well as its relative autonomy and consequently its causal capacity or power in the temporal realm.

In light of Dante's *Convivio* and *Monarchia*, the *potentia sive virtus intellectiva* formula indicates human perfection as the ultimate limit of the intellectual capacity of the soul. Thus, humanity can be differentiated from other creatures *by its nature*.

Likewise, I have attempted to examine how the causal model from the *Liber de causis* applies to Dante's political treatises. This is evident in the identifica-

tion of God with the First Cause (which is also conceived of as a paradigmatic cause) that creates all entities and preserves them in a state of being. Because humanity is created directly by God, the Monarchy occupies an intermediate space between the First Cause and humanity. Therefore, the Monarch may play the role of Intelligence, since his function is to rule over the things that are beneath him. It is in this respect that Dante describes the Emperor as the universal cause of the right political order. When humanity is guided by the Monarch and becomes a united whole, it may resemble its cause, which is God.

The notions of *potentia* and *virtus* apply to the constitution of the human soul's nature. Thus, they form the basis of Dante's argument to construct and consolidate the identity of temporal government in Book I. In Book III, these concepts affirm a relative autonomy of monarchy as a political institution in relation to the authority and power of the papacy.

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CHAPTER 17

Notes on the Presence of the *Elements of Theology* in Ficino's *Commentary on the Philebus*

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1 Introduction*

This short essay is intended to partly discuss how Proclus' *Elements of Theology* radically shaped Marsilio Ficino's *Commentary on the Philebus*. Without entering into the debate about the latter's significant influence over Ficino's 'original' philosophical works,[1] it shall present certain corresponding passages between the *Elements of Theology* and the *Commentary on the Philebus*. Moreover, apart from the effort to unearth philological or doctrinal affinities between these texts, there is an ongoing scholarly discussion, on which I shall not focus here, about Ficino's translation of the *Elements of Theology*.[2] Although it does not aspire to be exhaustive, this essay serves, however, three objectives: first, it starts with certain introductory remarks that bring out Ficino's reception of the *Philebus* and the context of his preoccupation with this late platonic dialogue; second, it proceeds with a comparison of selected passages of the *Elements of Theology* and the *Commentary on the Philebus* on a purely textual and *philological* basis, hence Moerbeke's Latin translation was preferred to Proclus' Greek text; finally, it attempts to concisely offer some suggestions concerning the *philosophical* significance of some of the affinities and discrepancies between the excerpts under comparison.

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1 See Allen's crucial remarks in Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, p. 2, 11–12.

2 Robichaud 2016, p. 50, 54.

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2 The *Philebus'* Significance for Ficino

Except for translating and successively commenting on the *Philebus* (in 1466–1467 according to Steel[3] or in 1469[4] according to Allen, and also in 1491 and 1492 for its second and third version respectively), Ficino also lectured on it publicly, these lectures providing the basis for the *Commentary on the Philebus*,[5] serving as an introduction to Platonism[6] and even aiming to uplift the moral and political status of his fellow Florentines. The fact that Ficino resorts to the *Philebus* (a radically unpolitical dialogue) for 'political' purposes allows us to better conceive of the intellectual and philosophical challenges he faced, since it sheds further light on his endorsement of a 'medical model' for philosophy and provides us with a fuller picture of how the enterprise of reviving Platonism came to be the historical role and task Ficino invented for himself.[7] However, all this vivid interest in an unquestionably abstruse dialogue is not understandable by itself, but if one considers the continuous commentary tradition preceding it. Contrary to what is currently the case, since the *Philebus* "if it is studied at all, it is reserved for the arcane discussions of graduate seminars or for specialists in late Platonic philosophy",[8] the Neoplatonic tradition held it in high esteem. One may discern here two fundamental aspects.

a) Given that Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* enjoyed wide acceptance and dominated the philosophical milieu, in his *Commentary on the Philebus*, Ficino made good use of Damascius' *In Philebum*[9] and explicitly argued for a pleasure *in ipso cognitionis actu*,[10] whereby he enriched Plato's replenishment model[11] and gave a thorough account of the way in which the reversion towards the One (that is, the Good and God), which satisfies our God-oriented *appetitus*, can be fully rewarding and pleasurable.

b) While in the *Republic* Plato hesitantly offered his readers a rather reserved account of the Good and Socrates restricted himself to certain cryptic and insufficiently illuminating formulations, the *Philebus* was thought by Neoplatonism as much more promising in this respect.[12] The three 'fea-

3 Steel 2013, p. 69.
4 Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, p. 52.
5 Hankins 1990, p. 484.
6 Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, p 1.
7 Hankins 1990, p. 288.
8 Frede 1993, p. XIII.
9 In Damascius, *Commentaire sur le Philèbe de Platon*, p. CLXXXVI.
10 Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, p. 327.
11 Gerd Van Riel 2000, p. 2, 7–42.
12 Gerd Van Riel 1997, p. 31–32.

tures' of the Good, introduced in 20d (translated by Ficino as *sufficiens*, *expetendeum*, *perfectum*) along with the unity of beauty, proportion and truth (65a) that secures the stability of the final mixture of the good life are all interpreted in connection with the Christian God.[13] Ficino was thus in position to reconstruct a robust platonic theory of the Good, much more convincing and detailed than that in the *Republic*,[14] and then subtly Christianize it in order to publicly argue for it in Florence. On top of that, he saw a decisive complementarity between the *Philebus* and the *Parmenides*, for the identification of the human good in the former[15] depends, according to him, on the specification of the One or the Absolute Good in the latter.[16]

3 *Elements of Theology* and the *Commentary on the Philebus*: Existing Evidence and New Suggestions

In one of his impressive contributions, Carlos Steel masterfully established that in articulating this metaphysical system, Ficino systematically draws from Proclus' *Elements of Theology* (and from his *Parmenides Commentary*, to which I shall not focus here). The evidence he adduces is overwhelming and proves that Ficino literally uses numerous and lengthy passages from the *Elements of Theology*.[17] The following annexes include some passages that seem to have been equally inspired by the *Elements of Theology*. That their degree of correspondence with the latter significantly varies (from passages taken almost literally to freely adapted or slightly modified ones) shall not make us underestimate the extent to which the most principal philosophical starting points of the *Commentary on the Philebus* are of a Proclian origin.

13 Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, p. 283–297, l. 355–369.

14 The idea that the *Philebus* adduces further arguments concerning the nature of the Good and thereby continues the relevant discussion of the *Republic* may also explain why Plato reintroduces Socrates in the *Philebus*; it seems more plausible that Socrates is back in order to accompany us ἐπὶ μὲν τοῖς τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ νῦν ἤδη προθύροις (64c) and not just because of the dialogue's moral character. Cf. Delcomminette 2006, p. 12–13.

15 Robichaud 2018, p. 170.

16 Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, ch. VI (p. 113), ch. I of the second book (p. 387–389).

17 Steel 2013, p. 73–74, 95–97. Explicit mention is made of prop. 1–4, 5, 20 for chapter IV, prop. 13 for chapter V and prop. 12 for chapters V and XXX.

Annexes

1)

Proclus, *Elements of Theology* (ed. H. Boese)	**Marsilio Ficino, *Commentary on the Philebus* (ed. Allen)**
80. Omne **corpus pati** secundum se natum est, omne autem incorporeum agere, hoc quidem operosum ens secundum se, hoc autem **passionale**; patitur autem et incorporeum propter communionem ad corpus, ut possunt agere et corpora propter incorporeorum coexistentiam. Corpus quidem enim *divisibile* est solum et hac **passibile**, omniquaque ens partibile et omniquaque in infinitum. Incorporeum autem, simplex ens, impassibile est. *Neque dividi* potest quod impartibile neque alterari quod non compositum. Aut igitur nihil erit activum aut incorporeum, siquidem corpus secundum quod **corpus non agit**, ad *dividi* solum et **pati** expositum. Quoniam et omne agens potentiam habet activam, quare non secundum quod corpus aget, sed secundum potentiam agendi in ipso; inefficax autem et impotens corpus secundum se: participatione ergo potentie aget quando agit. Quin immo et incorporea passionibus participant in corporibus facta, condivisa corporibus et assumentia partibilem illorum naturam, impartibilia existentia secundum sui ipsorum substantiam.	IV, p. 101. Id totum sic ab initio confirmatur. Cum **corpus** ex materia constet et quantitatem ratione materiae solum capiat, et ratione quantitatis solum *dividatur*, sequitur ut per haec **pati possit non agere**. Siquidem ergo agere videntur corpora, per aliud agunt, forte per qualitatem quae ex se est incorporea, cum plurimae sint eodem in corpore qualitates. Sed neque qualitas est per se principium actionis; quod enim non est per se, per se non agit. Eundum igitur est ad incorporale aliquid quod per se subsistat *neque* cum corpore sit *divisum*, talisque erit anima, quae quia ad se convertitur per se subsistit. Ab ea
43. Omne quod ad se ipsum conversivum est authypostatum est.	

(*cont.*)

Proclus, *Elements of Theology* (ed. H. Boese)	**Marsilio Ficino, *Commentary on the Philebus* (ed. Allen)**
186. Omnis **anima est incorporea substantia et separabilis a corpore**. **(…) Anima ergo neque corporea est substantia neque a corpore inseparabilis.** 191. Omnis anima participabilis substantiam quidem eternalem habet, operationem autem secundum tempus. (…) Relinquitur ergo sic quidem eternalem esse animam omnem, sic autem tempore participantem (…) Omnis ergo anima substantiam quidem eternalem habet, operationem autem secundum tempus. 199. Omnis anima mundana **periodis** utitur proprie vite et restitutionibus. Si enim a tempore mensuratur et transitive operatur et est hic proprius motus, omne autem quod movetur et tempore mensuratur, perpetuum ens, **utitur periodis** et **periodice** revolvitur et restituitur ab eisdem ad eadem, palam quod et omnis anima mundana, motum habems et operans secundum tempus, **periodos** motuum habebit et restitutiones; (…)	inerit vis agendi corporibus, ergo et vis movendi. Omnis ergo actus et motus corporum est ab **anima, quae essentia incorporalis est, unita corpori non commixta**, **coniuncta non dispersa**. Supra quam est et mens, et essentia incorporalis et a corpore penitus separata. Ideo nihil habet commune cum corpore. Illa stat essentia et operatione; corpus utroque fluit; anima essentia stat, operatione fluit. Illa omnino in aeternitate; corpus in tempore; anima in utroque. Illa movet non movetur; materia movetur non movet; corpus movet ab alio motum; anima movet a se mota. Ergo et mens et materia sunt extrema; media vero corpus et anima. Hoc ad materiam declinat magis; anima magis ad mentem. Cum dicimus animam se ipsa moveri, absolute non transitive verbum illud proferimus, ut cum stare mentem, lucere solem, calere ignem. Non enim pars animae movet pars movetur, sed tota ex se ipsa movetur, id est, discurrit, transigit per **temporum intervalla** nutritionis augmenti generationis opera, rationis et cogitationis discursiones. Agit mens sed cum aeternitate; agit anima sed cum tempore. Quid motus animae? Actio cum tempore, et quia prima actio cum tempore est in anima, ideo primus motus in anima et est in ea ratione sui in quantum iam a statu mentis degenerat.

Ficino's digression (*id totum … mentis degenerat*) interrupts the direct quotation of prop. 20 of the *Elements of Theology* (on p. 99 of the edition).[18] Here, as we can see, he implements another strategy, gathering and unifying material and insights from scattered Proclian passages in the *Elements of Theology*. Thus, he restates the successive ontological levels explaining how passivity, matter, corporeality, divisibility and quantity impede action. Though his exposition is compatible with the *Elements of Theology*, we should note Ficino's high sensitivity and accuracy when describing the connection of the incorporeal soul with the body. So as not to jeopardize the former's superiority, he cautiously avoids Proclus' risky formulation, according to which an incorporeal being can assume *partibilem naturam* (prop. 80) but also remain impartibile *secundum sui substantiam*. From a doctrinal point of view, his argument is much more safeguarded and moderate: the soul's essence is not threatened as long as the soul is not mixed with or dispersed through the body. In fact, it runs counter to Proclus' term *condivisa* (συνδιαιρούμενα), which implies that the incorporeal and the corporeal are unified and form a certain kind of 'mixture'. Ficino argues here for a more clear-cut distinction and his very emphasis on the fact that the soul is *non commixta* with and *non dispersa* through the body reveals his alertness to properly modify and even reject Proclus' formulations.

II)

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8. (…) Quod enim appetit aliquid indigens est eo quod appetit et alterum ab appetibili (…)
9. (…) **Si enim omnia entia bonum appetunt secundum naturam**, et hoc quidem se ipso exhibitiuum est eius quod bene, hoc autem indigens alio, hoc quidem presentem habet boni causam, hoc autem seorsum existentem, quanto igitur propinquius hoc largienti appetibile, tanto melius utique erit eo quod est indigens separata causa et aliunde suscipiente perfectionem existentie aut operationis.

II, p. 83. **Appetitus** enim **naturalis** est necessaria naturae inclinatio ab indigentia quadam adnitens ad plenitudinem. Plenitudo ac finis ultimus idem (…) [p. 85] Adde quod appetitio finis cuiusdam in rebus aut casu est aut usu aut **natura (…) Ergo natura;** etenim quod inest omnibus et semper a specie est atque natura, ergo ab eo quod est naturae et speciei principium, id est Deus. (…) Ergo [appetitus] ultimum consequitur finem. Non enim frustra praecipit et movet rex sapiens atque bonus, Deus autem per appetitum

18 Steel 2013, p. 95–97. He continues the quotation of prop. 20 on p. 103 until the end of the chapter.

35. (…) Si autem maneat quidem et procedat, non convertatur autem, quomodo qui secundum **naturam appetitus** uniuscuiusque ad id quod bene et ad bonum et que ad generans extensio?

concitat omnia. [XXXI, p. 311] Sic voluntas necessario vult bonum agendi principium instinctu superiori. Trahit enim ad se omnia principium rerum; id autem bonum est. **Necessario igitur omnia bonum appetunt**.

134. (…) Et enim ad que intellectuale idioma (vel proprietas) non procedit, ad hec preattingit quod divinum. Et enim **non intelligentia provideri volunt et boni alicuius sortiri; hoc autem quia intellectum quidem non omnia appetunt neque quibus participare possibile, bonum autem omnia appetunt et festinant sortiri**.

XXXIII, p. 333. **Quia omnia bonum appetunt, mentem vero non omnia**. Neque enim assequi mentem et sapientiam omnia possunt. Ideo multa eam frustra appeterent. Et ea quae mente carent non omnia mentem adipisci [p. 335] student. Quae vero mentem habent nondum cessant, sed adhuc bonum quaerunt (…) Primo sic **omnia appetendo convertuntur ad bonum, non ad mentem omnia** (…) Secundo sic **appetitus hominum naturalis omnis et semper ad bonum, non omnis et semper ad mentem;** pluris ergo facit bonum quam mentem.

31. Omne procedens ab aliquo secundum essentiam convertitur ad illud a quo procedit.
Si enim proveniat quidem, non convertatur autem ad causam processus huius, non utique appetet causam; ***omne enim appetens conversum est ad appetibile***. At vero omne appetit bonum, et illius ordo per proximam causam singulis; **appetunt ergo et suam causam singula**. *Per quod enim esse unicuique, per hoc et ipsum bene; per quod autem ipsum bene, ad hoc appetitus primo*; *ad quod autem primo appetitus, ad hoc conversio*.

XXX, p. 295. Deinde ratione sic, ***quia convertit*** [***bonum***] ***in se statim nascentium appetitus***. Unumquodque enim bene esse desiderat. *Bene esse habet unde et esse. Ad causam ergo convertitur. Etenim suo in esse servari quodcumque appetit*. ***Conservat esse quod esse dat. (…) Eiusdem igitur conservare est, cuius et generare. Effectus igitur causam appetit conservantem***. Ipsum ergo bonum, cum sit omnium causa, est omnibus expetendum.

"From God to God"—here is how one could summarize the philosophical core of the above passages. Indeed, the *appetitus*, which impels us to turn back to our cause and thus finally gain felicity and pleasure, is described by Ficino as totally manipulated by God, that is, the principle of *nature*.[19] 'Preprogrammed', as it were, this reversion shall culminate in our possession of Him, which signifies the accomplishment of a circular movement on our part as well as three interwoven kinds of perfection: our ontological perfection, for we now 'possess' or are identified with the highest possible ontological level; our ethical perfection, for it would be inconsistent to 'possess' the absolute Good without being in an ethically equally good state; our epistemological perfection, since God or the absolute Good is the highest possible object of cognition, the limit, as it were, of what we may aspire to know. The above excerpts could also be taken to constitute a brief summary of the whole Marsilio Ficino's *Commentary on the Philebus* in that they include all its crucial conceptual tools and anticipate Ficino's conceptualization of felicity and, by extension, of pleasure. He suggests a worldview, wherein felicity is somehow 'obligatory' and 'imposed' by our very nature, since the latter represents and executes a divine plan that excludes no one. Additionally, one can easily discern how skillfully Ficino blends ethics and metaphysics. Since "natura" is informed by God's will, the modern distinction between a normatively neutral and merely descriptive realm that belongs to nature and another that includes moral and value considerations is still untenable. The *Commentary on the Philebus* exemplifies the idea that the way things "are" is already instilled with the seed of how they "ought to be". In this respect, the attainment of felicity is dependent on our eagerness to facilitate the deployment of our nature.

III)

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21. (…) Quod enim in omni multitudine idem **non ab uno** eorum que in multitudine processum habet. Quod enim ab uno solo multorum **non est commune omnium**, sed solius **proprietatis** illius singulare. (…) Est ergo **unitas** una **ante multitudinem** secundum unumIV, p. 95. **Omnia corpora ad unum mundi corpus; omnes naturae ad naturam unam; omnes animae ad unam animam; omnes mentes ad unam mentem.** Bonum vero et unum unumquodque istorum est, ergo omnia bona et una ad unum bonum, sicut numeri

19 Marsilio Ficino, *The Philebus Commentary*, p. 85.

quemque **ordinem**, unam rationem et connexionem exhibens hiis que in ipso ordinantur ad invicem et ad totum. (…) **Ex hiis itaque manifestum, quod nature corporis inest unum et multitudo, et una natura multas habet copulatas, et multe nature ex una sunt totius natura; et ordini animarum adest ordiri ex una anima prima et in multitudinem animarum devenire et multitudinem in unam reducere; et intellectuali essentie monadem esse intellectualem et intellectuum multitudo ex uno intellectu procedens et in illam conversa**; et uni ei quod ante omnia multitudinem unitatum, et unitatibus eam que ad unum extensionem.

omnes ad unitatem. Unum ergo omnium est principium.

Omnis enim ordo quia in se habet **unionem** in quantum singula eiusdem sunt ordinis ab uno est **supra ordinem**. Nam unio ordinis **non ab uno** quodam ordinis est, esset enim illius **proprium neque omnibus** conveniret. Ergo ab uno **supra ordinem** quod est primo tale, ideo [p. 97] nihil aliud est quam tale, ut bonorum principium sit solum bonum;

IV)

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143. Omnia deteriora presentia deorum subsistunt; et si idoneum sit participans, omne quidem quod alienum a **divino lumine** fit, illustratur autem omne subito a diis.
Semper quidem enim divina magis comprehensiva et potentiora sunt procedentibus ab ipsis, participantium autem idoneitas illustrationis **divini luminis** causa fit; obscurat enim illam sua imbecillitate. Illa autem obscurata aliud aliquid videtur preeminentiam transumere, non secundum ipsius potentiam, sed secundum participantis impotentiam diffugere putantis speciem divinam illustrationis.

IV, p. 111. Praeparata autem esse oportet omnia ad gratiam **divini fulgoris** excipiendam.

XXXI, p. 299. Quid ergo in rebus aliis bonum? Huius, inquam, pro captu cuiusque imago. Omnia sequentia **lumina** primi **luminis** imagines sunt, a primo **lumine** dependentes.

See also: Ideo corpora in quibus terrea conditio praevalet, tanquam ineptissima **luci**, **lumen** nullum intus accipiunt. Non quia sit impotens **lumen** ad penetrandum. (*De sole*, ch. 9).

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1) One pinpoints here: a) the idea that the divine light stems from a caring, ontologically superior, principle spreading itself top-down, in order to illuminate what stands in a lower level of reality and is in need of illumination. In order to Christianize this picture, Ficino intentionally complicates this procedure by arguing not just for the divine light, but for its grace, through which he underlines the 'personal' commitment of the higher principle to the salvation of the lower levels of reality, b) the responsibility of the ontologically inferior beings to be light-friendly and vigilant, that is, to develop a certain readiness and prepare themselves for its reception. As for the latter, it depends on a robust sense of potency, while an equally uncompromising disapproval of impotence is advocated in both texts.
2) The relation between the higher level, wherein God and the divine light are to be situated, and the various lower ones, is depicted by Proclus in terms of participation, while Ficino resorts rather to the notions of *imago* and *dependence*; what is needed is the highest possible light receptivity, which varies *pro captu* of each being to attain the image of the Good. However different metaphors they may use, both Proclus and Ficino make the case for a transformation ad optimum.
3) The verbs *subsisto* and *excipio* bear a remarkable expressive potential. The first emphatically brings out how *deteriora* experience the gripping influence of the presence of gods, while the second underlines the challenge confronted by the recipient when receiving the divine light. Both of them can be taken to depict a certain backward movement, a subtle retreat. In the first case, this movement underlines the 'ethical distance' or the gap separating *deteriora* from gods. In the second case, it serves to bridge the gap and is made only to facilitate the light's reception; the recipient, 'aware', as it were, of the ontological superiority of what is going to be provided with, subtly retreats in order to fully embrace the gift coming from above.
4) One should not overlook here a crucial difference between Dodd's and Moerbeke's text. The former's accusative δοκοῦν (line 18) has as its subject the ἄλλο τι (line 15), while the latter's genitive *putantis* (line 9) the *participantis* (line 8). At first sight, this divergence does not touch upon the light reception procedure, since regardless of whether the ἄλλο τι or the *participans* (if we follow Moerbeke's choice) has the appearance of "revolting against the divine form of illumination", as Dodds translates, the result remains the same: the divine light does not "assume dominion". These alternatives, however, do result in a radically different *philosophical* picture. If it is this ἄλλο τι that has the appearance of "revolting against the divine form of illumination", then the emphasis is put

rather on the obstacles and the external enemies confronted by the participant; what is underlined in this case is that a certain seemingly powerful being or entity, an anonymous factor, impedes the divine light's downward movement, while in reality the problem lies in the recipient's incompetence and overall ontological disablement. If, on the other hand, it is the participant that has the appearance of "revolting against the divine form of illumination", as Moerbeke's translation indicates, then the overall impression bears certain quasi-religious and sin-related connotations in that the resistance to the divine light implies that the recipient of the divine gift forcefully rejects it. Our attention is thus turned from its deficiency to a certain sense of distorted conversion, since the participant turns towards its cause not in order to thankfully embrace it, but aiming only to reject it. In this case, therefore, the participant is described not only as predominantly responsible for its overall condition, but is also charged for light-resistance and an 'intentional' ontological stagnation.

v)

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26. (…) At vero ipsum unum **immobiliter** substituit. **Si enim per motum, motus in ipso esset et motum neque unum adhuc erit, transmutatum ex eo quod unum. Aut si post ipsum sit motus, et ex uno erit et aut in infinitum aut immobiliter producet ipsum unum**. (…)

27 (…) **Manet enim quale est**, et quod producitur aliud penes ipsum est. *Inalteratum* ergo generans consistit et inminoratum, **fecunda potentia se ipsum multiplicans** et a se ipso secundas ypostases exhibens.

XXX, p. 293. Primum sic ostenditur [sufficiens], quod scilicet **immobile** permanens creat. **Nam si per motum, aut motus ille in eo est, aut extra. Si in eo, ipsum mutatum esset ab uno et bono, ergo quodammodo ab uno et bono discederet, debilitaretur igitur**. Maxime vero potens apparet aliquid, cum aliud efficit (…) **Sin extra sit**, ergo motus ab eo productus utrum per motum an sine motu? **Si primum, in infinitum ibitur. Si secundum, constat quod manens immobilis generat**. Immo vero cum omnis motus impetus sit ad aliquid quod deest, deest aliquid primo si movetur. (…) Quare *cum nulla sui transmutatione* producat, **stans in se ipso creat**. Non ergo defectu proprio extrinsecus aliquid quaerens ad agendum exit, [p. 295] sed exuberante **foecunditate se propagat**.

The terminological and philosophical continuity between the *Elements of Theology* and the *Commentary on the Philebus* is again easily identifiable. Ficino's philosophical intention is to show that the deployment of God's creative potential does not require any kind of movement. Since the adjective *sufficiens* comes from Plato's *Philebus* (ἱκανὸν in 20d), where it is attributed to the good within a radically different context, Proclus is probably the pagan mediator and authority that facilitates this (unacknowledged) transition. Also, it is noteworthy that Ficino's scope is, as usually, much more restricted than that of Proclus. The former argues for certain 'features' of one specific entity, that is, the Christian God, while the latter aims for universality, for the relevant propositions start with *omnis causa productiva* and *omne producens* respectively.

4 Conclusion

Dedicated to the relation between the *Elements of Theology* and the *Commentary on the Philebus*, this short essay suggested some similarities and parallel motifs between these texts. The above annexes suffice to prove Ficino's peculiar creativity; they indicate that he does not simply reproduce ideas and texts, but takes pains to substantially rephrase (and even contradict) his sources or, when borrowing a whole proposition or a lengthy passage, to reorder the structure of the argument. They also bring out the fact that almost all of the crucial concepts grounding the *Commentary on the Philebus* are expounded in Proclian terms. What is most important, however, is to acknowledge how skillfully he exploits the potential of pagan arguments in order to promote Christian insights and ponder over Ficino's reasons for resorting so systematically to Proclus. Part of the answer may reside in his understanding that Proclus' writing, with all its impressive sense of impersonal authority and irrefutability resulting from its geometric model of presentation, accorded his *Commentary on the Philebus* the majestic and persuasive tone that was indispensable for his philosophical endeavor. In grounding the whole commentary on Proclus' axiomatic formulations (and not so much as one might expect on Dionysius' attractive, but suspicion-arousing, eloquence), Ficino provided his audience with a seemingly unquestionable and solid system of thought that, despite its pagan character, could easily be presented as the basis of a Christian worldview.

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PART 5

The Hebraic Tradition

∵

CHAPTER 18

Hillel de Vérone, traducteur et annotateur du *Livre des causes* en hébreu, en Italie à la fin du XIII^e siècle

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Le *Liber de causis* connut un notable succès en hébreu, en Italie, entre le dernier quart du XIII^e siècle et le premier quart du XIV^e siècle. Sur la base de la traduction de l'arabe en latin par Gérard de Crémone (entre 1167 et 1187) il fut traduit 1) par Hillel de Vérone, après 1272 ; 2) par Juda Romano pendant le premier quart du XIV^e siècle ; 3) par 'Eli Ḥabilio (*fl.* ca. 1470) ; en outre il l'avait été, à partir de l'arabe, par l'Espagnol Zeraḥiyah Ḥen, en Italie encore, dans les années 1280 ; enfin, le manuscrit de Paris, BN(F), *hébreu* 706 contient une autre traduction, anonyme, indépendante des précédentes, limitée aux « théorèmes » sans les « démonstrations » ou développements.

Les raisons de ce succès sont malaisées à assigner au-delà de la simple vraisemblance : l'existence de quelques cercles désireux et en mesure d'accéder à des textes scolastiques latins ; l'intérêt privilégié, dans ces cercles, pour la traduction de textes à succès de la scolastique chrétienne, surtout lorsqu'ils étaient brefs et pouvaient prendre la forme d'un catéchisme ; l'émulation à l'intérieur d'un même milieu puis, peut-être, dans le cas de Ḥabilio, le désir de se poser comme le spécialiste du domaine en substituant ses traductions à celles qui existaient, ou de se faire leur réviseur puriste à la manière des nouveaux traducteurs humanistes ; l'intérêt particulier de disposer d'un cadre de pensée ou d'une autorité pour se représenter les relations des hautes entités de la métaphysique, comblant ainsi un vide laissé par Aristote, et en accord avec le monothéisme[1] ; l'intérêt pour une doctrine qui pouvait résonner à la fois avec

1 Cf. D'Ancona 1992a [D'Ancona 1995, p. 217] : « les thèses incontestablement néoplatoniciennes des lemmes ont été conçues par ces auteurs comme étant le véritable sommet de la métaphysique d'Aristote [...] une continuité réelle subsiste [à leurs yeux] entre la métaphysique aristotélicienne et ce qui était envisagé comme son dernier achèvement : la doctrine des premiers principes et des substances séparées présentée dans le *De causis* [...] On a déjà remarqué que le sujet lui-même du traité *De causis* a été soudé au principe fondamental de l'épistémologie aristotélicienne, la définition de la connaissance véritable comme connaissance des causes » ; et toute la suite de l'article montre comment les premiers commentateurs latins ont identifié dans la doctrine des éléments aristotéliciens. D'Ancona 1992b [D'Ancona 1995, p. 239] :

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les formules et les représentations spontanées de la piété la plus traditionnelle (la Cause première plus présente et agissante que les causes prochaines de la proposition 1 évoque irrésistiblement le « Notre Père, notre Roi », très proche et très lointain tout ensemble, de la liturgie des Jours redoutables aussi bien que toute la problématique de la providence générale ou particulière) et s'accorder, dans des milieux plus savants, avec les métaphores de l'épanchement dont Maïmonide, fort cultivé dans le premier milieu italien de ces traductions[2], est prodigue ; ces métaphores sont familières aussi aux auteurs kabbalistes (l'un d'eux, Abraham Abulafia, fut un élève de Hillel de Vérone) et le *Liber de causis*, en même temps que cette convergence, pouvait apporter de quoi échapper aux risques de polythéisme ou du moins d'atteinte à l'unité et à la toute-puissance divine que pouvait comporter leur doctrine au moins aux yeux des philosophes de formation[3]. Un annotateur critique des extraits traduits par Juda Romano du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin au *Liber de causis*, Moïse b. Sabbataï (fl. v. 1340), utilise d'abondance le *Liber* pour combattre la théorie des *sefirot*, tant dans sa version ancienne que dans la nouvelle, introduite par Menahem de Recanati[4].

Ces motifs de vraisemblance ou ces justifications *a posteriori* gagneront à être éclairés par les éléments de commentaire, gloses et notes, introduits selon toute vraisemblance par l'un des traducteurs, Hillel de Vérone, dans l'unique manuscrit de sa propre traduction partielle. Déjà partiellement éditées[5], ces notes n'ont jamais été analysées. Nous les (ré)éditons en fin d'article, à partir du manuscrit unique, et nous en donnons pour la première fois une traduction et un commentaire.

« Les progrès des recherches démontrent en effet que, lorsque des interprètes médiévaux, tels Albert le Grand ou Gilles de Rome, conçoivent ce traité comme un « quinzième livre » à rattacher à la *Métaphysique* d'Aristote, ils sont moins naïfs qu'on pourrait le croire sans une analyse détaillée de la doctrine du *Liber de causis*. Résultat du projet entamé par l'hellénisme arabe naissant, cet ouvrage se présente en effet aux lecteurs du XIII^e^ siècle comme un traité de théologie philosophique *ad mentem Aristotelis*, qui reconnaît un seul Dieu créateur et providents, et présente une version de la doctrine néoplatonicienne du premier principe qui était déjà familière, dès la tradition des œuvres de Denys ».

2 Sur lequel voir l'article toujours fondamental de Sermoneta (1965).

3 Ces motivations possibles ont déjà été énumérées dans Rothschild 2013b ; Rothschild 2015, p. 29-30.

4 V. Rothschild 2018, p. 10-15, p. 136-163 et, pour le texte hébreu correspondant, p. 199-221.

5 Par Moritz Steinschneider dans Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš*, éd. S.Z.H. Halberstamm, f. מאrv, qui indique en tête qu'il ne s'agit que de notes prises autrefois en vue de son ouvrage sur les traducteurs, qu'il n'avait pas l'intention de publier et qui auraient mérité d'être vérifiées sur le manuscrit.

1) Le ms. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Michael 335 [(*olim* 82) = catalogue Neubauer 1318[6], f. 75-81v (le commentaire s'étend jusqu'au f. 82[7]) (I.M.M.H. 22132)] est l'unique témoin d'une traduction en hébreu, partielle et commentée, du *Livre des causes*. L'écriture, de style ashkenaze, serait datable au milieu du XV^e^ s.[8], mais l'attribution des notes critiques à un certain Hillel a fait attribuer le tout à Hillel de Vérone, actif en Italie vers la fin du XIII^e^ s. : ainsi, en dépit du caractère de copie de travail de ce manuscrit à la présentation très modeste et peu soignée, est-on loin d'avoir affaire à un autographe. Le recueil, dû à différentes mains du milieu du XV^e^ s.[9], se caractérise par la forte présence d'écrits de logique (f. 1-35, 43-45, 55-62) ou de recueils de définitions (*Livre des définitions* d'Isaac Israéli, f. 45v-54 ; lexique, f. 63-66 ; à partir du *Liber de causis*, il s'agit davantage d'ouvrages philosophiques ou exégétiques (f. 82-85v : petit traité de l'âme, anonyme, et notes de psychologie discontinues ; f. 87-101, Kalonymos b. Kalonymos, *Le Serviteur de Moïse* (*Mešareth Mošeh*), défense de la théorie maïmonidienne de la providence ; f. 102-107, Abraham bar Hiyya, *Pensée de l'âme* (*Higgayon ha-nefeš*), traité de morale philosophique ; f. 108-122, Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Livre du Nom* (*Sefer ha-Šem*) et commentaire du même).

2) La structure du texte est la suivante : le traducteur distingue, dans son prologue, puis le copiste sépare physiquement dans la copie, les propositions (*haqdamot*) et leur « commentaire » (*peyruš*), distingué des propositions par un passage à la ligne et la mention : « le commentateur dit » (*amar ha-mefareš*). La traduction est incomplète car il manque certains « commentaires », ou développements[10], omis ou abrégés, explicitement ou non, presque systématiquement à partir de la prop. 20[11]. Les propositions, initialement non numérotées, sont au nombre de trente et une. Une main moderne les a numérotées en chiffres hébreux, jusqu'à trente-deux, en comptant pour deux (4-5) la quatrième proposition, non scindée dans le texte, et en comptant la proposition 8(9) bien qu'elle soit réduite à presque rien (§ 80 de l'éd. Pattin) et ajoutée sans

6 Neubauer 1886, col. 465-467 ; description du contenu plus complète dans le catalogue en ligne de l'Institute of Microfilms of Hebrew Manuscripts de Jérusalem.

7 D'après Zonta 1996, p. 228, n. 12, le texte se termine à 85v, mais il semble bien s'agir d'autre chose dès le f. 82 ; nous suivons la foliotation inscrite sur le manuscrit.

8 May, Beit-Arié 1994, p. 219.

9 May, Beit-Arié 1994, p. 219.

10 Que nous appellerons désormais « développements », pour éviter la confusion avec les commentaires latins allégués et les commentaires mêmes de Hillel, que nous nommerons, pour la même raison, de préférence, « notes ».

11 Manquent les développements des prop. 9, 12, 16, 20-23, 28-31, ceux des prop. 25-27 et 32 sont fortement abrégés.

solution de continuité à la fin de la proposition 7(8) (en l'absence de proximité particulière entre elles, cette réduction de la prop. 8(9) ne paraît pas résulter d'un principe délibéré [comme il arrive pour l'omission de développements que Hillel déclare oiseux] mais de quelque accident textuel) ; les prop. 9(10) à 13(14) ont reçu les numéros 10, 12, 24, 11 et 13, le nº 24 étant placé entre les numéros 23 et 25. Le traducteur ou quelque intervenant insère des gloses copiées à l'intérieur du texte sans discontinuité[12] ; des notes critiques figurent à partir de la prop. 6(7), introduites par les mots : « Hillel dit » (*amar Hillel*), dans l'espace du texte copié. Il n'est pas sûr qu'on doive attribuer au même intervenant deux notes critiques regardant la prop. 1 et deux notes explicatives portant respectivement sur des points du texte des propositions 2 et 3 : elles se trouvent en effet en marge, quoique d'une main qui ne distingue pas à première vue de celle du copiste principal, et elles ne sont pas introduites par *amar Hillel* mais par des formules courantes pour des interventions de cette nature, *teymah* (« c'est étonnant ») et *qašiyah* (« il y a là une difficulté ») pour les deux objections, *peyruš* (« explication ») pour les deux explications. En outre, à la prop. 4, trois fois (§§ 45, 49, 53) et à la prop. 6(7), § 70, la mention dans le texte ou en marge d'autres leçons (גי, גי״א = [אחרת] גירסה, ou en araméen גרסא אחרא, « [autre] leçon ») suppose une révision, apparemment limitée à cette proposition, qu'on n'a pas de raison d'attribuer à un autre que le premier traducteur. Enfin il faut noter que le texte prend fin, après une longue note sur la prop. 32, au milieu du f. 82r, immédiatement suivi d'un petit traité de l'âme ou d'une suite de notes discontinues à dominante psychologique dont la première a trait à la perfection de l'âme[13], qui s'étendent jusqu'au f. 85, où apparaissent les noms de Maïmonide et d'Aristote et, cités par « Hillel », des titres de recueils midra-

12 Elles figurent entre accolades dans l'édition de la traduction elle-même, Rothschild 2013c.

13 *Inc.* שלמות הנפש עולה בשני ענינים: בחכמה ובכח, וזה הכח בכאן אינו כמו הכח הנאמר בספרי הרפואות והטבע אבל הוא כח מדות טובות, החכמה [...] תכיר את בוראה ית׳ ותבחין בין האמת והשקר, « La perfection de l'âme consiste en deux choses : la science et la puissance ; mais la puissance dont on parle ici n'est pas comme celle dont il est question dans les livres de médecine et de [science] naturelle », etc. ; ce début paraît sur quelques lignes comme une paraphrase de la *Logique* d'al-Ghazzâlî (nous citons la traduction latine de Dominicus Gundissalinus : *Logica et philosophia*, f. a2v : *Perfectio anime constat in duobus : munditia scilicet et ornatu. Munditia vero anime est vt expurgetur a sordidibus moribus et suspendatur a phantasiis turpibus. Ornatus vero eius est ut depingatur in ea certitudo veritatis ita ut reuelentur ei veritates diuine* [...] *in qua non fit error nec occultatio*) mais la suite diverge. – L'ensemble de ce texte a été publié sans annotation par Steinschneider dans Halberstamm, éd. cit., à la suite immédiate de ses notes sur la traduction annotée du *Liber de causis*, f. מא-מבv, à partir, semble-t-il, d'une transcription faite par un autre.

chiques, avec une note *Amar R. Ellul* (f. 83v) dans laquelle Steinschneider a cru voir une confusion italienne avec le nom de Hillel et une note *Amar Hillel* au f. 84.

3) Il est temps de considérer de plus près la question de l'auteur de la traduction, des gloses et des notes : c'est Moritz Steinschneider qui paraît avoir posé, sans s'en expliquer, l'identité du traducteur, du commentateur et de Hillel de Vérone[14], suivi sur ce point par Adolf Neubauer, l'auteur du catalogue des manuscrits hébreux de la Bibliothèque Bodléienne.

Il peut être utile d'argumenter quelque peu cette attribution. Le nom de Hillel (une fois, Hillel b. Samuel, identité du patronyme qui a sans doute servi à fonder l'attribution) n'apparaît qu'en tête du commentaire critique des propositions, à partir de la prop. 7, f. 77r jusqu'à la fin. Le début des notes qui suivent les prop. 7[15], 15 (numérotée 14[16]), 16 (nº 15[17]) renforce la probabilité que le glossateur (en tout cas celui qui s'exprime sous le nom de Hillel) soit le même que le traducteur : il indique n'avoir pas « écrit » (*lo' kathabhti*) certains éléments du développement originel des propositions qui lui semblaient inutiles ; toutefois il reste possible que le glossateur n'ait seulement pas « copié », à partir de la traduction hébraïque déjà existante et plus complète, les éléments dont il parle. Nulle citation du *De causis*, explicite ou non, n'a été relevée par les éditeurs du grand ouvrage de Hillel de Vérone, écrit à la fin de sa vie, les *Rétributions de l'âme* (*Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš*)[18] ; du moins peut-on faire valoir que leur auteur utilise l'assez rare *Sefer ha-hatḥaloth* d'al-Fārābī[19], référence de prédilection du Hillel, glossateur du *De causis* ; ensuite, que le glossateur manifeste un intérêt pour des implications doctrinales regardant la médecine, et que Hillel est médecin (mais c'est le cas de bien des philosophes juifs). Au total, une

14 Steinschneider 1863, p. 110-114 (111), puis Steinschneider 1893 [1956] p. 262-263, renvoyant à l'éd. Halberstamm, introd., p. 10 et extraits, f. מא.

15 אמר הלל בן החסיד ר׳ שמואל זצוק״ל המפרש האריך הנה בדברים יתרים בלתי צריכים ולכן לא כתבתים. C'est la seule fois où apparaît le patronyme de ben Samuel, qui ne fournit qu'une probabilité d'identification avec l'auteur des *Tagmuley ha-nefeš*, une homonymie étant toujours possible et ces noms, très courants.

16 אמר הלל המפרש האריך הנה בדברים יתרים שהם מעורבבים ולכן לא כתבתים וכו׳.

17 אמר הלל דברי הפירוש בזה הוא [!] נבוך לבלי צורך ולכן לא כתבתים.

18 Steinschneider en relevait une, qui militait selon lui en sens inverse, trouvant invraisemblable que Hillel ne se soit pas servi de sa propre traduction, si elle avait déjà été écrite ; mais les éditeurs suivants, Sermoneta et Schwartz, n'ont dit mot de cette référence.

19 Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer Tagmulé ha-nefesh* (éd. Sermoneta), p. 240 et index des textes allégués dans le commentaire, p. 268 ; *Über die Vollendung der Seele*, p. 301.

constellation d'arguments faibles, pour et contre, mais en voici un bien plus fort : l'identité du traducteur avec Hillel de Vérone semble garantie par l'emploi (prop. 1) d'un mot très rare, *ṣidduq*[20], plusieurs fois employé dans les *Rétributions de l'âme* ; or si le traducteur lui-même est Hillel de Vérone, il n'est pas raisonnable de supposer que le Hillel glossateur soit un autre que lui ; d'ailleurs, sans noter le mot *ṣidduq*, Steinschneider avait déjà relevé trois autres formes ou acceptions rares, communes à la traduction ou aux gloses du *De causis* et aux *Tagmuley ha-nefeš*[21].

Récapitulation des arguments : pour l'attribution à Hillel de Vérone, 1) le fait que très peu d'auteurs et moins encore de traducteurs se nomment Hillel et sont médecins ; 2) l'usage, commun aux *Tagmuley ha-nefeš* de Hillel de Vérone et aux gloses dont nous parlons, d'un texte rarement cité d'al-Fārābī ; 3) surtout, des éléments caractéristiques de vocabulaire, en particulier le mot *ṣidduq* que seul Hillel de Vérone est connu pour employer ; contre cette attribution, un argument unique, le fait que la traduction en question ne soit citée ni implicitement, ni explicitement, dans les tardives *Rétributions* (*Tagmuley ha-nefeš*), mais cela peut s'expliquer de diverses façons, y compris par une traduction encore plus tardive.

La question de l'attribution des notes peut cependant être posée à un autre niveau : étant admis que Hillel de Vérone soit le plus vraisemblable rédacteur des notes en hébreu qui accompagnent probablement sa propre traduction du *Liber de causis*, a-t-il fait preuve d'originalité dans ces notes ou a-t-il seulement traduit des éléments d'un commentaire latin ? Steinschneider estimait qu'il s'agissait d'une traduction[22]. Notons seulement que nous verrons plus loin (5)

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20 Le terme, rare, a quasiment la valeur d'une signature. Il se trouve quatre fois dans la traduction anonyme de la prop. 1 (une fois glosé en marge אונליטר[רטי], *rationaliter*), Yosef Sermoneta l'a relevé deux fois dans les *Tagmuley ha-nefeš* et il se trouve encore, dans le manuscrit d'Oxford (f. 82v), dans le texte *Šᵉlemuth ha-nefeš* qui suit le *De causis* : Rothschild 1994, p. 411 ; Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer Tagmulé ha-nefesh* (éd. Sermoneta), p. 248 ; Steinschneider dans Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš* (éd. Halberstamm), p. 23 et f. יב, כב et מב, l. 19 et 24.

21 Dans Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš* (éd. Halberstamm), f. מא, note : il s'agit de *selah* employé comme adverbe signifiant l'éternité (glose de la prop. 11[12]), de *eyneymo*, « ils ne sont pas » [avec suffixe archaïsant] (prop. 4) et de *nolad* pris au sens d'un « engendrement » de nature logique (longue note à la prop. 16(17), f. 79v, 80).

22 Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš* (éd. Halberstamm), f. מא : *we-ʿad ha-yom lo' eda' mi hu' ha-mefareš* (*ha-noṣri*) *ašer debarayw neʿetequ mi-R. Hillel*, « jusqu'aujourd'hui j'ignore quel est le commentateur (chrétien) dont les propos ont été traduits par Hillel » ; noter que le même (1893 ; 1956²), p. 262, ne parle plus de traduction strictement dite : « Ich glaube, Hillel hatte einen anonymen christlichen Commentar vor sich, und wahrscheinlich den des Thomas d'Aquino, aus dem er eine frappante Parallele giebt » (donc, deux

que la recherche, à laquelle Steinschneider lui-même avait déjà dû procéder, de sources latines parmi les commentaires les plus répandus et à portée d'être connus, en Italie, de juifs extérieurs à l'université donne des résultats très partiels, pas assez pour parler d'une traduction, mais suffisamment pour supposer que le reste a pu être apporté par Hillel lui-même, qui de toute façon intervient lorsqu'il se réfère à Maïmonide ou à un *Livre des principes* qui n'est pas celui que les Latins connaissent.

Hillel b. Samuel b. Éliézer de Vérone était né en Italie entre 1220 et 1230[23], peut-être à Forlì[24], où il passa ses dernières années et écrivit les *Rétributions de l'âme*[25]. Son grand-père, R. Éliézer b. Samuel, était un talmudiste renommé[26]. Il affirme avoir été étudiant, sans doute en médecine, dans les universités de Barcelone puis de Montpellier[27]. Dans la première de ces villes, il aurait été le disciple, entre 1259 et 1262, de Jonas de Gérone (R. Yonah Girondi). C'est peut-être celui-ci qui aurait fait naître chez Hillel une sorte de vénération pour Maïmonide. De retour en Italie, il exerça la médecine ; il séjourna à Rome avant de se fixer à Capoue comme médecin[28] tout en donnant des cours sur le *Guide des égarés* ; le kabbaliste Abraham Abulafia y fut son élève. La fin de sa vie se passa à Forlì. On lui doit, selon Steinschneider[29], d'avoir, le premier des philosophes juifs, utilisé systématiquement les sources latines[30] et on pourrait voir en lui, toutes proportions gardées, une sorte d'Albert le Grand juif, dans la mesure où il est le premier à mettre en présence les sources de deux traditions qui s'ignoraient avant lui (la tradition latine et la tradition gréco-arabe en ce qui concerne Albert, la tradition grecque-arabe-hébraïque et la tradition

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commentaires chrétiens ; le parallèle avec Thomas, pour lequel il est renvoyé à *Hebräische Bibliographie* 6, 1863, p. 111, n. 2, est celui de la prop. 10(11)/12, note b ; l'argument de Bardenhewer 1882 [v. *infra*, n. 46], que le recours à Thomas aurait empêché l'attribution qu'a donnée Hillel, est jugé faible : « Hillel konnte ein Exemplar ohne Prooemium vor sich haben, oder hatte einen Grund, Thomas' Ansicht nicht zu berichten »).

23 La plus récente mise au point est fournie par l'introduction de Schwartz, Fidora 2009, p. 9-48.

24 Vogelstein, Rieger, 1896, p. 260, n. 2.

25 Hillel de Vérone, *Sefer Tagmulé ha-Nefesh* (éd. Sermoneta), p. IV.

26 Vogelstein, Rieger, 1896, p. 400.

27 Vogelstein, Rieger, 1896, p. 272. Selon Sermoneta (1972 ; 2007), p. 113-115, nous n'avons aucune preuve de son séjour à Montpellier.

28 Dans une lettre qu'il lui adresse, un correspondant lui écrit : « ou il te suffit de visiter tes malades et d'examiner les urines », etc. (*Oṣar neḥmad* 2, p. 142). R. Qalonymos b. Qalonymos, un contemporain, mentionne dans sa *Masekhet Purim* un « médecin Hillel ».

29 Steinschneider 1874, p. 91.

30 Relevé des gloses latines des *Tagmuley ha-nefeš*, éd. Sermoneta, p. 250-253.

latine, en l'occurrence, elle-même déjà enrichie par l'apport arabe, chez Hillel), sans parvenir à les rendre entièrement compatibles.

Son œuvre[31], bien moindre cependant que celle d'Albert le Grand, comprend des traductions médicales et des œuvres philosophiques personnelles. Il a traduit la *Chirurgia magna* de Bruno di Lungoburgo[32] ; la *Tégnè* (*Ars parva*) de Galien[33] ; une traduction des *Aphorismes* d'Hippocrate (Paris, BN, hébr. 1111) portant des notes marginales dont une au nom de « Hillel » peut-elle lui être attribuée sans autre preuve[34] ? Ses œuvres personnelles sont un commentaire des vingt-cinq premières propositions du *Guide des égarés*[35] ; trois questions sur l'exercice par l'homme du libre arbitre, sur le châtiment d'Adam exercé aux dépens de l'humanité entière et sur les anges déchus[36] ; un *Ma'amar ha-darban* (*Livre de l'aiguillon*) dont subsiste un fragment[37] ; deux lettres au médecin Isaac b. Mardochée (Maestro Gaio)[38] ; il correspondit aussi avec Zeraḥiyah Ḥen (autre traducteur du *Liber de causis*) et deux lettres conservées de celui-ci permettent de reconstituer la doctrine de son correspondant sur les points de l'origine du langage et sur la réalité historique des miracles bibliques (un position conservatrice dont se gausse Zeraḥiyah)[39] ; peut-être écrivit-il un

31 Récapitulée récemment par Leicht 2013, p. 592-598, avec indication des manuscrits et des éditions.

32 Ms. Paris, BN, hébreu 972, f. 22v, titre : *ha'ataqat Gali'anus we-Aleqsander. Sefer ha-keritut ha'ataqat R. Hillel be-Rabbeynu Šemu'el z"l kefi hagadat Ma'eštro Bruno bi-lešon ha-noṣri ha-ma'atiqo hu' me-hagadah* (sic ?) *Gali'anus u-me-Abiṣino we-Almansor we-'Ali u-she'ar ḥakhamim qadmonim.* – Il existe une dizaine d'autres témoins.

33 Avec le commentaire d' 'Ali b. Ridhwan, traduit du latin de Gérard de Crémone. Deux mss, semble-t-il : Paris, BN, hébreu 1111, f. 32-45v et Rome, Bibl. Casanatense 2834 (Sacerdote 201), f. 187-228v (édité par A. Berliner).

34 Comme se le demande Steinschneider dans *Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš* (éd. Halberstamm), p. 9.

35 Éd. Halberstamm, à la suite des *Tagmuley ha-nefeš*, f. 32v–40. Postérieur aux *Tagmuley*, qu'il cite.

36 Ms. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibl., hebr. 120, f. 54-66v ; v. éd. Sermoneta, p. XV et n. 15 ; éd. par Steinschneider dans *Sefer tagmuley ha-nefeš* (éd. Halberstamm), f. 45-55. v. sur la première Sadik 2013, p. 292-314 (selon cet interprète, l'homme ayant été créé d'après R. Hillel pour choisir le bien, le choix du mal résulte d'un défaut « accidentel » d'exercice des facultés de l'âme et en particulier de l'intellect) ; sur la troisième, Sermoneta 1974.

37 Ms. BN, hébreu 704, f. 83v–86v ; un ouvrage de ce titre est mentionné dans les *Tagmuley* ; éd. I. Goldblum, *Mi-ginezey Yiśra'el be-Fa'riz*. S'agirait-il d'un autre ouvrage de même titre ? Sermoneta n'en dit rien dans sa propre édition et ne se prononce pas sur l'attribution du texte de Paris.

38 Futur médecin du pape Nicolas IV (Sermoneta, 1972 ; 2007) ; Vogelstein, Rieger, 1896, passages notés dans l'index.

39 Sermoneta 1965, p. 11 et n. 18, renvoyant à l'éd. des lettres de Zeraḥiyah par R. Kirchheim dans *Oṣar neḥmad* 2, 1857, p. 124-143 et à son propre travail Sermoneta 1962.

ouvrage sur l'examen des urines (ms. Rome, Bibl. Casanatense 200) et, avant tout, les *Rétributions de l'âme* (*Tagmuley ha-nefeš*), qui cherchent à concilier les notions rationalistes relatives à l'âme et les textes rabbiniques concernant sa rétribution, qu'il juxtapose en deux parties. Son redécouvreur au XX^e^ siècle, Giuseppe Sermoneta, discernait chez lui, en dépit de son rationalisme et de son dévouement à la pensée de Maïmonide, une authentique sensibilité aux dangers pour la foi que comportait la spéculation philosophique[40] ; il estimait que, dans une crise qui selon lui (Sermoneta) faisait écho à celles de l'Université de Paris en 1270 et 1277, à l'occasion de la condamnation des thèses dites « averroïstes », la position de Hillel correspond à celle des aristotéliciens modérés de Paris, aussi éloignés des averroïstes radicaux que des anti-aristotéliciens « obscurantistes »[41].

L'enseignement dispensé à Abraham Abulafia pose la question d'une éventuelle étape kabbalistique dans son évolution. M. Yossef Schwartz, qui a introduit et traduit en allemand une partie des *Tagmuley ha-nefeš*, ne tranche pas mais note que les oppositions courantes entre philosophie d'une part, kabbale ou mystique d'autre part, ne valent pas dans son cas.

Confrontant les épistémologies juive, arabe et latine, Hillel, médecin, s'intéresse particulièrement dans les *Rétributions* à l'articulation de l'ontologie et de la psychologie : immatérielle, l'âme n'a plus, après la séparation d'avec le corps, moyen de s'individuer, et l'on rejoint la théorie averroïste de l'unicité de l'âme ; Hillel l'évite par une solution de type néoplatonicien qui mêle des éléments avicenniens et gabiroliens : si l'intellect est la forme de l'âme, celle-ci acquiert le statut de principe matériel et devient principe d'individuation de l'intellect. En même temps, il refuse l'hylémorphisme aristotélicien au profit d'un cosmos néoplatonicien dans lequel les forces immatérielles peuvent se substituer à la causalité physique. Cette association du physique et de l'épistémologique est, selon M. Schwartz, caractéristique de la tradition tolédane de la réception d'Avicenne.

Le caractère « séparé » de l'âme, supposé rendre compte d'une capacité du mental à agir dans l'ordre physique[42], s'entend en divers sens : à la fois

40 Sermoneta, 1972 ; 2007. Dans la première partie des *Rétributions*, R. Hillel traite le problème d'actualité de savoir si les âmes survivent individuellement ou si, comme le pensent les averroïstes, elles ne forment qu'une seule âme immortelle. Il se rallie à la première opinion, seule conciliable avec les données religieuses traditionnelles.

41 Sermoneta, éd. cit., p. IV-V.

42 C'est une doctrine qui reçoit à la même époque ses lettres de noblesse avec le commentaire du *Canon* d'Avicenne donné par le professeur de médecine Taddeo Alderotti à Bologne vers 1289, quoiqu'elle suscite l'opposition de certains de ses élèves, tel Gentile da Cingoli : Robert 2014, p. 152-167.

l'incorporéité de l'âme et la différence ontologique de l'intellect qui l'informe, en tant que substance céleste, par quoi s'établit une continuité ontologique entre les entités célestes (appelées « corps » de manière homonymique) et l'intellect humain ; en un troisième sens, thomiste, le composé humain d'intellect, âme et corps est unique en son genre, par là séparé à la fois des règnes angélique et animal. Hillel est plus proche de l'émanatisme d'Avicenne et de Maïmonide tel qu'il le comprend que de l'aristotélisme d'Averroès ou de Thomas. Encore l'émanation ne doit-elle pas être pensée comme un mouvement physique, l'absence de mouvement propre de l'âme expliquant à la fois, si nous comprenons bien les analyses de M. Schwartz, sa persistance dans un corps et son éternité. La capacité d'interférence des forces spirituelles dans le monde physique est probablement aussi en jeu dans les miracles et a permis à Hillel, d'une manière jugée paradoxale par M. Reimund Leicht qui en a traité récemment[43], de défendre l'autorité de Maïmonide, maître à penser des rationalistes, en recourant à des récits miraculeux. Tel est le fond sur lequel vient s'inscrire l'intérêt, lui-même ambivalent, de Hillel, à la fois traducteur et critique du *Livre des causes*.

Un autre point de l'introduction de M. Schwartz aux *Rétributions de l'âme* est à rappeler ici : chez Hillel, un triple substrat, fait de textes hébreux originaux, de traductions hébraïques à partir de l'arabe, antérieures à Hillel, et de ses paraphrases personnelles de textes latins, a pour conséquences une syntaxe parfois obscure, une logique différente d'une source à l'autre et un vocabulaire novateur, non-tibbonide, changeant lui aussi selon les sources, par là également difficile en l'absence d'autres textes formant avec celui-ci une *Diskursgemeinschaft* qui aiderait à restituer à sa langue un sens suffisamment univoque.

4) La datation : Hillel de Vérone aurait écrit à Forlì, à la fin de sa vie, après 1287[44], les *Rétributions*, selon Steinschneider en 1291. Steinschneider, sur la base d'une citation du *De causis* dans les *Tagmuley ha-nefeš* dans laquelle le mot-clef de « cause » n'est pas traduit de la même manière que dans sa traduction du *De causis*, estime celle-ci postérieure, jugeant invraisemblable que Hillel se soit écarté de son propre choix, s'il avait été antérieur[45]. En revanche, Bardenhewer croit que la citation de la prop. 5 rapportée à un ouvrage sur les substances supérieures en trente-deux chapitres sous le nom de Platon, dans les *Imrei šefer* (« Paroles de beauté ») d'Abraham Abulafia, ouvrage de 1291, ne peut avoir pour

43 Leicht 2013.

44 Voir *supra*, n. 25.

45 Steinschneider 1852-1860, col. 742 (*eodem fere tempore* [que la traduction de Zeraḥiyah Ḥen (1284)]) ; id., dans Halberstamm, éd. cit., p. 10 ; puis id. 1893 ; 1956[2], p. 267.

source que Hillel (cette désignation et cette attribution lui font évidemment écho), ce qui suppose sa traduction antérieure ou remontant au plus tard à 1291[46]; d'un autre côté, il la pense peu postérieure à celle de Zeraḥyah Ḥen (1284)[47]. Une datation approximative de la traduction du *Liber de causis* circule depuis les années 1980, apparemment sans fondement; elle place l'ouvrage entre 1250 et 1290[48], soit indifféremment de part et d'autre d'un moment pourtant décisif de la réception latine du *De causis*, l'identification par Thomas de sa source principale.

La proposition initiale d'attribution des théorèmes à Platon et la note critique de la proposition 16(17) permettent pourtant de préciser quelque peu:

a) en l'absence de source connue comportant cette attribution à Platon, on est tenté d'y voir une transposition de l'attribution à Proclus, qui ne se rencontre qu'après la découverte par Thomas d'Aquin de la relation étroite entre le *Liber de causis* et l'*Elementatio theologica*, exposée dans son commentaire en 1272, à la suite de la traduction de l'*Elementatio* par Guillaume de Moerbeke en 1268[49]. Le traducteur hébreu continue cependant d'attribuer les développements à al-Fārābī, ce qui pourrait relever du régime, antérieur, des premiers commentateurs latins qui attribuaient les théorèmes à Aristote et les développements à al-Fārābī[50]. Toutefois, Gilles de Rome lui aussi, bien qu'au courant de la découverte faite par

46 Bardenhewer 1882, p. 318-320. C'est qu'Abulafia fasse état de trente-deux propositions qui fait supposer à Bardenhewer que sa source est Hillel plutôt que la traduction antérieure (1284) de Zeraḥiyah b. Še'alti'el Ḥen, qu'il connaît (p. 305-308); il pense en effet que l'attribution à Platon n'était pas rare, pourrait donc avoir eu une autre source.

47 Bardenhewer 1882, p. 308, n. 1: «Nicht viel später anzusetzen als die Übersetzung Serachja's».

48 Rothschild 1994, p. 405: «XIII[e] [3/4] s.»; Zonta 1996, p. 228: «probabilmente verso il 1290», sans doute à la suite de Sermoneta 1965, p. 34, n. 70: «nel 1290 o nel 1291, forse a Forlì»); *Über die Vollendung der Seele*, p. 11, «gegen Ende seines Lebens in Forlì [...] während der späten 1280[er] Jahre»; Zonta 2011, p. 32: «ca. 1260?» (renvoyant à Halberstamm et à Rothschild, déjà cités), suivi par Rothschild 2013a, p. 394: «vers 1260». Aucune de ces datations n'est motivée.

49 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. XXXIV-XXXV pour les deux dates.

50 Cf. D'Ancona 1992a, p. 215-216: dans la «première réception latine du *De causis*», les lemmes sont attribués à Aristote et les explications à d'autres auteurs; huit manuscrits parmi les quatre-vingt-douze examinés par Pattin ainsi que les commentaires du Ps.-Henri de Gand et du Ps.-Adam de Bocfeld attribuent ces explications à al-Fārābī; Albert y voit l'un des auteurs mis à contribution, avec Aristote, Avicenne et Algazel, par l'auteur. – La double attribution initiale «s'explique comme une réaction à l'apparition d'un ouvrage qui devait appartenir à Aristote, mais qui, en même temps, était tellement différent des autres ouvrages aristotéliciens connus» (ibid., p. 217). Bardenhewer 1882, p. 56, proposait que cette attribution eût sa source dans une confusion avec le *Liber de principiis* d'al-

Thomas, maintient l'attribution, peut-être, des développements, assurément au moins de leur choix et de leur arrangement, à al-Fārābī[51].

b) La critique de la prop. 16(17) comporte une référence au « l. XI de la *Métaphysique* » dont il serait raisonnable de penser, en contexte fortement théologique, qu'il s'agit du Livre Λ ; ce qui théoriquement placerait ce texte avant la numérotation en quatorze livres, inconnue auparavant des Latins (et de la tradition arabe à laquelle Hillel aurait pu avoir quelque autre accès) opérée par Guillaume de Moerbeke dans sa traduction dont la première rédaction serait datable fin 1260-1261 et la seconde entre 1266 et 1268, au plus tard 1270[52] ; et qui, pratiquement, ne nous apprendrait rien, la rapidité avec laquelle une découverte textuelle de cette nature aurait pu arriver à la connaissance d'un juif étant tout à fait inconnue. Toutefois, la référence paraît plutôt être au Livre K, ce qui fournit un *terminus post quem* effectif.

c) L'élément le plus sûr tient dans la référence au *De ente et essentia* de Thomas d'Aquin, à propos de la prop. 31(32), puisque cet ouvrage a été écrit entre 1252 et 1256[53].

d) Ensuite, on pourrait, à la suite de Steinschneider, tirer argument de l'absence déjà mentionnée de référence à la traduction du *De causis* dans les *Rétributions de l'âme* pour proposer que Hillel ne l'eût connu et à plus forte raison traduit qu'après avoir écrit ce traité. Mais cet argument a la fragilité des preuves *a silentio*[54].

e) Enfin, nous croyons percevoir quelques affinités avec le commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin (1272), et même quelques signes de proximité avec le commentaire de Gilles de Rome (v. 1290). Nous croyons, quoi qu'il en soit, pouvoir nous fier au critère de l'attribution au courant platonicien pour proposer comme la plus vraisemblable une date en tout cas postérieure à 1272.

Fārābī, texte que Hillel, précisément, rapproche du *De causis* ; cependant, ce *De principiis* ne semble pas connu en latin.

51 Gilles de Rome, *Expositio super auctorem De causis*, n.p., division M : *Causa vero efficiens ignoratur, sed creditur a multis fuisse Alpharabium* [...] *in greco autem habentur propositiones Procli, a quibus hae propositiones emanauerunt.*

52 Aristote, *Metaphysica*, transl. G. de Moerbeka, p. 249-268 (en part. 249, 253).

53 Thomas d'Aquin, *De ente et essentia*, éd. Leonina, p. 319-320.

54 Steinschneider estime (éd. Halberstamm, p. 10) qu'il y a dans *Tagmuley ha-nefeš* des citations du *Liber de causis*, selon une autre traduction ; mais les éditeurs postérieurs (Sermoneta, Schwartz) ne les y ont pas trouvées ; de plus, rien n'empêcherait que Hillel n'ait plus disposé de son texte et ait dû citer d'après une autre traduction, ou de mémoire, ou ait retraduit.

5) Affinités, donc, avec les commentateurs latins : elles semblent assez minces. On relève quelques traces littérales qui font penser à un accès au moins partiel au commentaire de Thomas : dans la note à la prop. 1, que si la cause première agissait directement dans le causé, la cause seconde serait inutile, s'appuie peut-être sur Thomas citant Proclus, *Elementatio theologica*, 56 : « Omne quod a secundis producitur, et a prioribus et causalioribus producitur eminentius, a quibus et secunda producebantur » (Saffrey, p. 5, l. 18-20), ce qui donnerait à penser que la cause seconde soit seulement plus faible que la cause première ; toutefois, l'objection suppose d'ignorer la suite du commentaire de Thomas aussi bien que l'exemple cité par le développement de la proposition (Pattin, §§ 6-11), figurant pourtant peu après le lieu de cette intervention dans le texte hébreu. De plus, il n'est pas impossible de retrouver le germe d'une autre question chez Thomas (Saffrey, p. 9, l. 10-11).

La critique de la prop. 10(11) présente des points communs de forme[55] et de fond avec le commentaire de Thomas, lequel d'ailleurs lui restitue son intelligibilité (v. *infra* la traduction commentée des notes).

Dans la note à la prop. 11(12), en insistant en termes d'influx sur la particularité de chaque mode de présence d'une substance en l'autre, et en écartant l'hypothèse d'un influx, Hillel pourrait faire écho à la fin du commentaire de Thomas (Saffrey p. 81, l. 10-12, mais en termes de *similitudines et species*).

En 16(17), Hillel paraît emprunter deux éléments au commentaire des propositions voisines par Thomas : 15(16) (Saffrey, p. 93, l. 20-21) sur ce que le texte doit être corrompu, et 17(18) (Saffrey, p. 102, l. 7-8) pour l'exemple du feu et de la chaleur.

En 29(30), on trouve trace d'une distinction de Thomas (Saffrey, p. 134, l. 8-10), citant Proclus, entre *secundum suam substantiam* et le *per substantiam* du *De causis* ; Hillel opère comme Thomas le rapprochement avec la proposition précédente (ibid., l. 1 : *Hic ponitur propositio conversa* [cf. *mithafekhoth*] *prioris*). Toutefois, alors que Thomas oppose des substances dépendantes du temps et d'autres, subsistantes par soi, Hillel s'en tient à l'opposition plus générale entre substances par soi et substances dépendantes d'autre chose.

En 30(31), on est proche de Thomas (Saffrey, p. 141, l. 10–p. 142, l. 3) qui envisage successivement cette position intermédiaire entre le temps et l'éternité pour le *corpus caeleste* et pour l'âme ; toutefois, Thomas conclut à propos du premier qu'il ne relève que du temps ; et, quant à la seconde, il ne formule pas comme Hillel de restriction à « certains degrés ».

55 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 74, l. 25-26 : *Hac enim probatione suscepta, multa fundamenta catholicae fidei tollerentur*.

En 31(32), le lien établi avec la proposition précédente est analogue à celui qu'opère Thomas (Saffrey, p. 143, l. 1–p. 144, l. 3), par l'intermédiaire de la prop. 107 de Proclus, quoique la présence du temps dans l'éternité et de l'éternité dans le temps soit peut-être mal comprise. Le long développement sur le Premier participé et non participant est parallèle à celui de Thomas (Saffrey, p. 144, l. 28–p. 145, l. 14). Ajoutons pour mémoire que cette dernière intervention se termine par la traduction d'un bref extrait du *De ente et essentia* de Thomas.

Quelque connaissance du commentaire de Gilles de Rome paraît cependant aussi[56] : d'abord, l'attribution à Platon et à al-Fārābī, figurant au prologue. Ensuite, les objections posées contre la prop. 1 sont explicitement formulées chez Gilles[57] ; l'étonnant, cependant, est qu'il n'en paraît que la formulation, sans les solutions qu'il apporte lui-même ; aussi pourrait-on supposer qu'elles se sont présentées spontanément à l'esprit de Hillel, ou qu'il a suivi quelque autre source (ou entendu quelque dispute) qui posait les mêmes questions[58] mais n'apportait pas de solutions, ou encore que ces dernières ne lui ont pas convenu.

En 10(11)b : « Cependant le commentaire de cette proposition est contraire à la foi et il n'y a pas à s'appuyer sur lui ». Ce jugement porte logiquement sur la partie omise du développement, dont n'a été expressément rapportée que la

56 Steinschneider 1863, p. 212, en doutait : « Die Übersetzung des Jehuda hat sowenig als die des Hillel etwas mit Aegidius zu thun » (il est vrai qu'il parle plutôt de la traduction elle-même) ; dans Steinschneider 1893, p. 262-263, il fait état d'un commentateur chrétien anonyme et de Thomas, sans nommer Gilles.

57 Gilles de Rome, *Expositio super auctorem De causis*, f. 2vM : *Dubitaret forte aliquis, quia videtur falsum* [...] *quod causa prima prius attingat causatum quam causa secunda, et quod ultimo recedat ab eo* [...]. *Non ergo plus influit causa prima, nec eius influentia ultimo recedit, sed videnter haec omnia simul esse* ; f. 4rY : *quomodo causa prima adiuuet operationem causae secundae, et det ei quod agat ;* f. 4vAA *utrum omne illud quod efficit causa secunda efficiat causa prima* ; f. 5rEE : *Cum ergo quaeritur utrum aliquo modo producatur effectus a causa secunda, quo* (*scil. : quod*) *non producatur a causa prima, vel econverso* ; f. 5vGG : *quomodo causa prima vehementius et fortius agit in re, et quomodo est maioris adhaerentiae cum re quam causa secunda* ; ibid. 11 : *quomodo causa prima conseruat causam secundam in actione sua* ; f. 6r : *si res procedit a causa prima sub esse magis universali a causa vero secunda sub esse magis speciali* [...] *causa secunda magis faciet ad esse rei quam causa prima*.

58 L'arsenal n'en est pas illimité et nous trouvons aussi dans le Ps.-Henri de Gand, *Quaestiones in Librum de causis*, q. 5 (p. 27-28), peut-être, le même problème que dans la q. 1a/ii dus ms. hébreu ; aux q. 9-13 (p. 33-39), assurément, ceux des qq. 1a/iii et 1b de l'hébreu). Il nous a paru cependant moins vraisemblable que Hillel ou son annotateur ait eu connaissance d'un auteur sans rapport avec l'Italie.

fin (« Le commentateur dit à la fin de l'explication, avec force »). Cette dernière glose reprend sans doute à peu de chose près la formulation de Thomas, mais renvoie par là non, comme lui, à la fin du théorème (Saffrey, éd. cit., p. 73, l. 4-5 : « signanter autem dicit quae non destruuntur neque cadunt sub tempore », où il s'agit de la fin de la proposition proprement dite[59]), mais à la démonstration, dont il supprime le début à cause de l'incompatibilité doctrinale. On pourrait supposer dès lors un recours parallèle à Gilles, qui conteste le même point que Thomas, mais à propos du début du « commentaire » (f. 39v).

Puis, en 11(12), Hillel, dont nous avons dit qu'il pourrait faire écho à la fin du commentaire de Thomas (Saffrey p. 81, l. 10-12, en termes de *similitudines et species*), est plus proche de Gilles (f. 41v), qui marque plus nettement la hiérarchie descendante que suppose l'« épanchement d'épanchement » dont parle Hillel et qui emploie *fluunt*, comme Hillel le terme d'« épanchement ».

À la différence de la légère présence de Thomas, qui se manifestait par quelques similitudes littérales, celle de Gilles est à la fois rare et plus abstraite : on pourrait imaginer que Hillel, plutôt que de lire le commentaire même de Gilles, ait pu en percevoir quelque écho dans un échange informel avec des savants chrétiens ou en assistant à quelque controverse publique. Une telle hypothèse présente l'inconvénient de dispenser à peu de frais de rechercher des sources précises mais c'est peut-être à elle que conduisent des tentatives infructueuses du passé pour identifier des références chrétiennes, chez Gersonide par exemple[60], aussi bien que la vraisemblance des réalités sociales.

6) La doctrine des notes : sous réserve de ce que le traducteur anonyme et l'intervenant Hillel (b. Samuel) soient bien tous deux Hillel de Vérone (ce qui est apparu plus haut comme très probable), nous disposons du cas privilégié d'un traducteur qui réagit lui-même au texte qu'il traduit, à ses contradictions internes, obscurités ou redondances et, ce qui nous intéresse davantage, aux contradictions dans lesquelles ce texte nouveau peut entrer par rapport aux doctrines tenues, ou au moins déjà connues, par lui, traducteur. Si le commentateur n'était pas le célèbre Hillel de Vérone et n'était pas le même que le traducteur (ce qui, nous l'avons vu, est le moins probable), nous aurions tout de même affaire à la seule critique interne et externe portée, à notre

59 Ce n'est pas, cependant, que *signanter* veuille dire « comme à titre de signature », ce mot, qui figure à diverses reprises dans le commentaire de Thomas, signifiant en latin médiéval « de manière signalée, expressément ».

60 Voir Pinès 1967 ; Möbuß 1991 ; Sirat, Klein-Braslavy, Weijers 2003.

connaissance, par un lecteur juif, sous la forme d'un commentaire suivi, sur l'ensemble du *Liber de causis*[61].

Si le métalangage de Hillel est rigoureux, il faut distinguer chez lui deux types d'interventions : le type introduit par le mot *peyruš* (« explication ») qui est anonyme et au service du texte (voire, résume le développement originel de la proposition lorsqu'il est omis, comme il arrive fréquemment dans la troisième dizaine de propositions), et les interventions introduites par *Amar Hillel*, qui introduisent des objections ou remarques de son propre chef. Avant de présenter la partie critique des notes, il convient de dire un mot de la brève introduction que le traducteur donne au texte : Tout en proposant la double attribution des théorèmes à Aristote (et plus probablement à Platon) et celle des commentaires à al-Fārābī, ce qui est courant, Hillel est à notre connaissance le seul à faire état d'un rapport privilégié avec ce qu'il nomme le *Livre des principes* de ce dernier, plus connu comme traité de philosophie politique, le *Livre du gouvernement*[62], mais qui existe en hébreu sous ce titre de *Livre des principes*[63] et qui semble inconnu en latin[64]. En vérité, la première moitié

61 La traduction d'une partie du commentaire de saint Thomas par Juda Romano, l'usage tacite et partiel qu'il peut avoir fait du *Liber de causis* dans ses ouvrages personnels, celui, explicite mais tout aussi partiel, qu'en a fait Moïse b. Sabbataï en annotant sporadiquement la traduction de Juda Romano et en employant certaines propositions du *De causis* à l'appui dans sa polémique contre les kabbalistes (v. *supra*, n. 4), n'ont pas la même importance à cet égard.

62 Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb as-suyāsa al-madaniyya*, éd. Najjar ; éd. et trad. espagnole R. Ramón Guerrero 1992, p. 1-70, analysé par Munk 1859, p. 344-347 (p. 344-345 : « les six principes des choses sont : 1° le principe divin, ou la cause première, qui est unique ; 2° les causes secondaires ou les Intelligences des sphères célestes ; 3° l'intellect actif ; 4° l'âme ; 5° la forme ; 6° la matière abstraite (*hylè*). Le premier de ces principes est l'unité absolue, tandis que tous les autres représentent le multiple. Les trois premiers ne sont ni des corps, ni en rapport direct avec les corps ; les trois derniers ne sont pas en eux-mêmes des corps, mais sont unis aux corps. Les genres des corps sont au nombre de six, savoir : les corps des sphères célestes, l'animal raisonnable, l'animal irraisonnable, les végétaux, les minéraux et les quatre éléments. L'ensemble composé de ces six genres forme l'univers. – Après qu'il a parlé de tout ce qui dérive des six principes et qu'il est arrivé à l'homme, il examine l'organisation de la société », etc.).

63 Al-Fārābī, *Sefer ha-asif*, 1849 (réimpr. en Israël, [5]730-[1969/70]), p. 1-64. Voir Steinschneider, Steinschneider 1893, p. 290-292, signalant l'attribution probablement erronée de la traduction hébraïque dans le manuscrit qu'il a utilisé à Samuel Ibn Tibbon plutôt qu'à son fils Moïse, faisant état de plusieurs autres manuscrits et notant l'obscurité du style ainsi que le manque de correction de l'édition.

64 Il paraît sans rapport avec le *Liber sex principiorum* mis à partir d'Albert le Grand sous le nom de Gilbert de la Porrée ((Ps.-)Gilbert de la Porrée, *Liber sex principiorum* ; éd. d'un texte récrit par Hermolaus Barbarus dans la PL 188, col. 1257-1270) mais donné comme anonyme par Roger Bacon (Minio-Paluello, p. XLVII) et Thomas d'Aquin (Minio-Paluello,

y est consacrée successivement aux principes métaphysiques (éd. Filipowski, p. 1-17), puis à une description de l'agencement des « choses secondes » qu'on peut regarder comme une cosmologie (p. 18-31), avant que ne soient introduits l'homme et la société. Hillel s'y référera deux fois dans ses notes sur le texte.

La critique doctrinale, telle qu'elle ressort des interventions sous le nom de Hillel inscrites dans la justification du texte, peut se répartir en trois blocs : pour procéder du plus simple au plus complexe, les interrogations d'un médecin, probablement ; une défense théologique de l'unité et de la transcendance divines ; diverses questions métaphysiques dans lesquelles la doctrine du *Liber de causis* paraît en contradiction avec des autorités, voire, si l'on voulait attribuer aussi à Hillel les notes anonymes et marginales à la prop. 1, radicalement discutable dès son début.

Deux questions touchent l'épistémologie médicale : la première n'est pas sous le nom de Hillel : en 1b il est observé que les processus physiologiques ne vérifient pas la célèbre thèse initiale, que la cause première agit dans le causé en l'absence de la cause seconde : à défaut du sang et des humeurs, les causes plus lointaines, les éléments et les végétaux sous forme alimentaire, n'agiraient pas sur le corps. Le second point touchant à la médecine est bien sous le nom de Hillel, en 10(11)a : si, comme l'énonce le *Liber de causis*, il n'est de science que de ce qui n'est pas soumis à la corruption, quel est le statut de la médecine ? Ici, le lecteur critique paraît consentir à cette thèse, puisqu'il commente en disant que c'est ce qui a obligé Avicenne à relativiser le statut scientifique de la discipline en question en la définissant comme une science pratique ; il ajoute cependant qu'il y aurait « d'autres réponses », mais sans en dire plus. On peut ajouter à ces marques avérées d'un intérêt médical le choix d'un exemple suffisamment usuel en physique et en métaphysique pour ne pas faire preuve à lui seul : dans la critique de la proposition 16(17), l'illustration de divers niveaux de causalité (au moins deux, essentielle et accidentelle) par l'exemple d'un corps

p. XLVIII) ; ce livre est pourtant cité occasionnellement dans les commentaires au *De causis*, à propos de la forme qui est le premier principe dont il traite (ainsi par le Ps.-Henri de Gand, *Quaestiones in Librum de causis*, p. 105, et par le Ps.-Adam de Bocfeld, cf. D'Ancona 1992a, p. 207, n. 70). Davantage, le commentant, Antoine André (ca 1280-1320) note qu'« Alii dicunt quod fuit Alpharabius commentator libri *De Causis* », d'autres, que c'est Gilbert (Minio-Paluello, p. XLVIII) : la communauté de titre est-elle le simple effet d'un caractère commun de « principes » (ceux du *Liber sex* étant forme, action, passion, temps, lieu, position, habitus, plus ou moins, avec d'inévitables recoupements) ou bien existe-t-il une affinité quelconque entre les deux ouvrages ? Hillel aurait-il été aiguillé vers ce texte à la lecture d'un commentaire latin qui se référait au Ps.-Gilbert de la Porrée, de manière plutôt circulaire si, comme l'indiquait Bardenhewer, l'attribution du *De causis* à al-Fārābī venait elle-même de son *De principiis* ?

humain échauffé, du feu (cause essentielle) et des modalités accidentelles du rapprochement des deux (proximité d'un feu, mouvement, nourriture et boisson chauds, air chaud).

Sur le plan théologique, des défenses des doctrines de la création et de l'unité et de la transcendance divines s'expriment à trois reprises. Le second commentaire (b) de la prop. 10(11) (à vrai dire, une seule phrase de celui-ci, qui n'en compte que deux dans l'édition Pattin) est purement et simplement déclaré omis comme « contraire à la foi », tel qu'on « ne doit pas prendre appui sur lui ». Il serait malaisé de dire ce qui a indisposé Hillel s'il n'apparaissait pas qu'il utilise ici le commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin, dont la critique est explicite. Le passage omis est le § 101 de l'édition Pattin :

> Quod est quoniam si intelligentia est semper quae non movetur, tunc ipsa est causa rebus sempiternis quae non destruuntur [nec permutantur] neque cadunt sub generatione et corruptione. Et intelligentia quidem non est ita, nisi quia intelligit rem per esse suum, et esse suum est sempiternum quod non corrumpitur ⟨…⟩.

Telle est la critique de Thomas : si un intellect immuable ne crée que des choses éternelles, alors ni les anges ni Dieu ne peuvent intervenir dans le cours des choses et, davantage, le monde lui-même sera éternel.

On croit aussi trouver, dans les mises en garde de Hillel, l'écho de la critique par Maïmonide des attributs divins (*Guide des égarés*, I, 51-60)[65]. La discussion de la prop. 16(17) est longue et assez peu claire dans le détail. Elle comporte, comme on l'a déjà indiqué, une distinction entre cause essentielle et cause d'un degré inférieur (celle-ci, qui prend l'exemple du feu, pourrait développer une brève notation de Thomas d'Aquin à la prop. 17(18), p. 102, l. 4-8 : « in unoquoque genere est causa illud quod est primum in genere illo […] ignis est primum calidum a quo omnia caliditatem sortiuntur »). Cette distinction vise à relativiser le sens dans lequel la proposition semble énoncer que l'unité soit la cause de l'infinité. Hillel élargit la discussion à deux autres propriétés qui

65 Cf. Moïse Maïmonide, *Le guide des égarés*, I, 53, t. I, p. 205-216 (ch. 51-60, p. 182-266), sur ce que les attributs ne sont pas séparés en Dieu mais ne font que décrire pour les hommes les actions diverses procédant d'une vertu unique. Il en résulte évidemment l'absence de dépendance de l'un par rapport aux autres. C'est peut-être de ce même refus de distinguer en Dieu des attributs essentiels que Hillel tire l'objection rapportée ensuite au nom de Maïmonide contre la métaphore du feu et du chaud qui, comme il le dit, ne regarde pas la présente question d'une éventuelle hiérarchie des attributs.

accompagnent celles-ci, le fait d'être premier et le fait d'être une forme séparée ; il insiste beaucoup, en terminant, sur ce que ces propriétés sont toujours simultanément présentes (c'est peut-être en ce sens seulement, selon lui, que l'on peut dire que l'une est « cause » des autres). S'il est vrai qu'il s'agit, tant dans la proposition et dans son développement que dans la note de Hillel, de tous les existants supérieurs, on est tenté d'assigner à cette note, la plus longue de toutes, l'enjeu de ne pas réduire Dieu, de même, à un de ses attributs, et de ne pas le subordonner à celui de l'unité. Hillel se réclame ici du *Livre des Principes* d'al-Fārābī[66], cite également la *Métaphysique*, XI (apparemment, non le Livre Λ, mais le Livre K, sur la non-divisibilité de l'infini en acte), peut-être aussi le lib. III à propos du caractère premier de l'un, si notre correction du texte hébreu est justifiée.

À l'occasion de la proposition 17(18), Hillel met en garde contre le risque d'attribuer à Dieu la vie, comme s'il en participait à la manière des existants créés. Elle ne s'applique à lui que de façon figurée (ou faut-il dire : équivoque ?), pour deux raisons : loin d'en être pourvu, il en est le principe même, ce que marque en hébreu l'adjectif (au singulier) qui lui est pour ainsi dire réservé (*ḥay*), alors que le nom de la vie (à laquelle participent les existants créés), *ḥayyim*, est morphologiquement un pluriel ; seconde raison, la définition de la vie suppose un corps animé, ce qui ne sied évidemment pas à Dieu. La notion d'usage figuré des mots vient sans doute encore de la critique des attributs divins par Maïmonide, quoique, peut-être, l'annotateur se souvienne ici à nouveau du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin, p. 102, l. 4-24 sur la différence entre une qualité telle qu'elle se trouve dans son principe et telle qu'elle se rencontre par participation dans des existants d'un degré inférieur.

Cette insistance répétée sur la transcendance absolue serait bien dans l'esprit de l'attachement farouche à une doctrine maïmonidienne sans concessions de l'unité divine que Sermoneta attribuait à Hillel de Vérone.

Quelques autres résistances doctrinales peuvent se ramener à des questions de vocabulaire ou, en d'autres termes, d'harmonisation de sources. Ainsi, la note sur la proposition 14(15) reconnaît la thèse célèbre de la coïncidence de l'intellect, de l'intelligent et de l'intelligible à propos de laquelle Hillel renvoie sans plus aux *Six Principes* d'al-Fārābī et à Maïmonide (*Guide*, I, 68).

La note sur la proposition 30(31) se borne à traduire l'ontologie abstraite du *De causis* dans les termes de la plus familière cosmologie aristotélicienne.

66 Éd. cit., p. 1, mais qui formule l'implication inverse : « ce qui est premier ne peut être pluriel, mais seulement un et simple » (ומה שבמדריגה הראשונה אי אפשר שיהיה הרבה אלא אחד פשוט לבד).

Singulière apparaît la note à la prop. 11(12) [24 dans le ms.] qui, sans objection ni référence à quelque autre manière de formuler les choses, se borne à éclairer un point de doctrine à vrai dire très spécifique, peut-être en s'aidant de Gilles de Rome.

Plus difficiles, et sans doute en correspondance souterraine l'une avec l'autre, les interventions des propositions 28(29) et 31(32).

À la proposition 28(29), il semble que pour Hillel, une essence puisse être soit auto-suffisante, soit engendrée par autre chose, contrairement à ce que lui paraît vouloir dire ici le *De causis*, que toute essence serait inengendrée. Il paraît, d'après quelques éléments formels, avoir sous les yeux le commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin, quoiqu'il soit très éloigné de le suivre dans le détail.

À la proposition 31(32), il prend expressément dans le *De ente et essentia* de Thomas d'Aquin, dont il traduit une phrase, une distinction entre existence absolue et participée. Dans les deux cas, il s'agit d'introduire une précision qui manque sinon aux notions mises en œuvre dans le *Liber de causis*, du moins à son vocabulaire.

Enfin, c'est la célèbre thèse initiale de la proposition 1 (avec sa reformulation à la proposition 11(12)/24) qui est l'objet d'une pluralité de critiques (rappelons que les notes à la prop. 1 sont anonymes et que leur attribution à Hillel n'est pas sûre) : l'intervention 1a en comporte trois :

i) si la cause première agissait directement dans le causé, la cause seconde serait inutile (peut-être d'après Thomas citant Proclus, *Elementatio theologica*, 56, qui énonce que ce qui est produit par les causes secondes l'est de façon plus éminente par les causes premières, mais à condition d'ignorer la suite et l'exemple de l'existant, de l'animal et de l'homme).

ii) On ne voit pas, dans cette succession de causes, la place de la disposition virtuelle que comporte la chose (est-ce la « puissance passive » de *Métaphysique* IX, 1, 1046a 10 sqq. et 6, 1048a 30 sqq. ?).

iii) La cause première, générale, ne rend pas compte des particularités individuelles (question formulée au moins chez Siger de Brabant et chez Gilles de Rome, problème abordé, quoique sans la forme de question, par Thomas) ; l'intervention 1b ajoute un autre motif (que nous avons déjà mentionné à propos du point de vue médical porté sur le texte), à savoir :

iv) la cause seconde est indispensable à la transmission de l'action de la cause première.

Les arguments (i) et (iii) pourraient procéder d'une mécompréhension du texte critiqué (celui-ci n'a jamais dit que la cause première suffisait à faire exister la chose) ; à moins qu'au contraire ils ne feignent d'accepter ses présupposés implicites pour en montrer l'impossibilité : la cause seconde ne saurait pouvoir ce que la cause première ne peut pas, car elle serait alors plus puissante

qu'elle : donc la cause seconde ne sert à rien ; donc, aussi, existant seule la cause première, générale, les particularités individuelles ne s'expliquent pas : double conséquence absurde ; l'argument (ii) possède une source philosophique respectable dans la *Métaphysique* ; l'argument iv où se pose, nous l'avons vu, la difficulté d'articuler discours métaphysique et discours naturaliste, lui non plus n'est pas sans valeur.

Il est cependant possible de retrouver ces questions sinon, de manière explicite, chez Thomas d'Aquin lui-même, du moins chez Gilles de Rome, et au moins deux d'entre elles, bien plus tôt, chez le Ps.-Henri de Gand ; cependant, le parallèle n'est que d'argument, sans que nous ayons identifié un exemple ou une forme de raisonnement communs ; or les objections élevées par l'un et l'autre paraissent de celles que tout étudiant en philosophie est en mesure de formuler spontanément au vu de ce théorème.

Traducteur critique, Hillel de Vérone (si c'est bien lui) témoigne ici, comme dans son ouvrage personnel des *Rétributions de l'âme*, d'une volonté de synthétiser une source néoplatonicienne reconnue comme telle (ou plutôt deux : le *Liber de causis* et le *Traité du gouvernement* ou *Traité des principes* d'al-Fārābī) avec la métaphysique d'Aristote et avec la théologie de Maïmonide exposée dans le *Guide des égarés* ; ou, mieux, il les confronte sans dissimuler la difficulté de les accorder. Son originalité en tant que commentateur du *De causis* tient sans doute aux critiques qu'il lui adresse : son désaccord avec la célèbre première proposition apparaît radicale (si les notes marginales sont de lui) ; aux propositions 16(17) et 17(18) en revanche, il s'agit surtout de mettre en garde contre des suites possibles du réaménagement du schéma de Proclus dans un système qui place Dieu au sommet, qui aboutiraient à un discours impropre tenu par rapport aux attributs divins. Enfin, tel le peintre qui se représente parmi les personnages de son tableau, le médecin traducteur a fait part des questions spécifiques que le *Liber de causis* posait à sa discipline. Ce traducteur-critique, encore une fois, tient dans l'histoire du *Liber de causis* une position singulière. Pour revenir à notre point de départ, il est loin de clarifier de manière irrésistible les motifs pour lesquels toute une famille de pensée du judaïsme italien a manifesté pour ce livre un intérêt exceptionnel.

Annexe: Texte, traduction française et commentaire des notes[67]

Titre-préface:

> זה הספר נקרא מאמר הל״ב הקדמות וקצת יחסוהו אל אריסטו, אבל הרוב אומרים שאפלטון חברו וכן נר׳ יותר, ואבונצר פירשו. ונראין הדברים שאבונצר פירשו כי רוב דברי הפירוש הולכים אחר כוונת אבונצר בספרו בששה התחלות. אמנם, יהיה מה שיהיה, הוא מאמר נכבד מאד על כל המאמרים שחוברו במציאות השכלים, חוץ מדברי אריסטו.

> Ce livre s'intitule *Écrit des trente-deux propositions*. Certains l'ont rattaché à Aristote mais la plupart disent que Platon l'a rédigé, et c'est ce qu'il semble davantage, et qu'al-Fārābī l'a commenté, et cela paraît vraisemblable car la plus grande partie du commentaire est conforme à l'orientation d'al-Fārābī dans son livre des *Six Principes*. Quoi qu'il en soit, c'est un écrit très important, [au-dessus] de tout ce qui a été écrit à propos de l'existence des intellects [séparés] en dehors des textes d'Aristote.

Hillel cite l'attribution à Aristote[68] en notant plus probable d'attribuer les théorèmes à Platon, avec le plus grand nombre. Cette affirmation ne laisse pas de surprendre, n'ayant de précédent ni chez les commentateurs latins fondamentaux[69], ni semble-t-il dans les manuscrits latins[70]. Que les « commentaires »[71] doivent être d'al-Fārābī est plus attendu: la division d'attribution des théorèmes et de leurs développements est constante chez les commentateurs latins jusqu'à ce que saint Thomas ait identifié le modèle fourni par Proclus[72], la

67 Les numéros sont ceux des 31(32) propositions selon la numérotation habituelle (éd. Pattin, *La deumeure de l'être* etc.), suivis pour plus de clarté par le numéro d'ordre, parfois divergent, dans le manuscrit (ex.: 10(11)/12). La position des notes est repérée plus précisément, s'il y a lieu, en italiques, par notre traduction française de la traduction hébraïque de Hillel ou, pour des parties manquant dans celle-ci, par la traduction française, *La demeure de l'être*, et par les numéros des divisions du texte selon l'éd. Pattin.

68 Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, l. II, p. 59a, 61b.

69 Indirectement Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 3.

70 À en juger par le *Liber de causis*, éd. A. Pattin, 1966, p. 13-32 [2000, p. 85-104], qui décrit sommairement quatre-vingt-douze manuscrits (deux cent trente-sept étaient connus de Richard Taylor en 1983) dont aucun ne comporte une telle attribution. Il relève cinq fois l'attribution à Proclus: la proximité des doctrines et des noms aidant, est-ce de là que le traducteur hébreu tire cette attribution? Son travail serait alors postérieur à la découverte de la source proclusienne par saint Thomas (1272).

71 V. *supra*, n. 10.

72 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 3, l. 3-10; Cf. D'Ancona 1992a, p. 215:

plus complexe ayant été celle d'Albert le Grand[73]; cependant, Hillel se réfère, dans cette présentation et à deux autres reprises dans ses notes sur le texte, à un livre des *Six Principes*[74] qui existe en hébreu[75] mais non, semble-t-il, en latin[76]. Le traducteur partage en tout cas avec les Latins l'attribution plurielle, signe du sentiment de se trouver en présence d'un écrit de synthèse doctrinale.

1/1a et b. Il n'est pas sûr que ces deux premières notes, disposées dans la marge du manuscrit, à la différence des suivantes, bien que, semble-t-il, copiées de la main du copiste principal, soient dues au même auteur que les suivantes.

1/1a.

> תימה: איך איפשר שתקדום פעולת הסבה הראשונה בעלול, טרם שתגיע אליו פעולת השנית? והלא ידוע שהראשונה אינה פועלת אלא באמצעות השנית, שאם לא תאמר כן, תהיה אז מציאות השנית חנם? ואם תאמר שהכח הוא הקודם, יקשה יותר, בעבור שהכח הוא התחלת פעלה או ראשית שינוי. ואם תאמר שיהיה הכח האחרון, יקשה בזה יותר, וצריך עיון דק שעוד [?] כל פעילה הרחוקה היא כללית כולית, והכללי אינו סבה אל הפרטי מן הצד שהוא בו [?] פרטי, כלומר אישי [...?], כמו שאמר אריסטו בשמע טבעי.

> C'est surprenant: comment se peut-il que l'action de la cause première précède dans le causé avant que ne l'atteigne l'action de la cause seconde? N'est-il pas connu que la première n'opère que par l'intermédiaire de la seconde, car si l'on ne dit pas cela, alors l'existence de la seconde est inutile? Et si l'on dit que la puissance est ce qui vient en premier, on est encore plus en difficulté, parce que la puissance est le début de l'action ou le commencement du changement, et si l'on dit qu'elle vient en dernier, c'est encore plus difficile, et il faut faire grande atten-

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«Dans les premiers ouvrages consacrés au *De Causis*, la distinction entre l'auteur des lemmes et leur *Commentator* est constante».

73 Albert le Grand, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, l. II, c. 1, p. 59-61: un ensemble d'énoncés d'Aristote (ou une lettre d'Aristote *De principio universi esse*) mêlés de matériaux puisés chez Avicenne, Algazel et al-Fārābī, arrangés en théorèmes par le juif David. Les enjeux philosophiques en ont été analysés en profondeur par Libera 1990, p. 354-364.

74 v. *supra*, présentation, n. 62.

75 v. *supra*, présentation, n. 63.

76 v. *supra*, présentation, n. 64.

> tion. En outre, toute cause lointaine est générale, universelle, et le général n'est pas cause du particulier en tant que particulier, c'est-à-dire individuel [… ?][77], comme a dit Aristote dans la *Physique*.

L'argument allégué se trouve en plus d'un passage de la *Physique* : I,9,12 : « Quand un animal doit devenir animal autrement que par accident, ce n'est pas de l'animal en général qu'il vient » ; II,3 est le chapitre des causes ; II,3,12 : « les causes et leurs différents genres peuvent être considérés aussi comme agissant indirectement et par accident. Ainsi c'est autrement que Polyclète est cause de la statue, et autrement que le statuaire en est cause (…) Par exemple, on pourrait dire que c'est l'homme qui est cause de la statue, ou même d'une manière encore plus générale que c'est l'être vivant. » ; 18 : « ce médecin particulier qui guérit existe en même temps que le malade particulier qu'il soigne » ; II,7,6 : « Il y a deux principes qui, dans la nature, peuvent mouvoir les choses ; l'un n'est pas du domaine de la Physique, attendu qu'il n'a pas en lui-même l'origine du mouvement ; et tel est l'être, s'il en est un, qui peut mouvoir sans être mu, comme le ferait l'être absolument immobile, et antérieur à tous les êtres ; l'autre principe, c'est l'essence et la forme, parce que la forme est la fin en vue de laquelle est fait tout le reste. » (trad. J. Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire). Mais il se trouve surtout en *Métaph.*, Λ, 5, 1071a : « l'homme a d'abord pour cause ses éléments, savoir le Feu et la Terre, comme matière, et sa forme propre, – puis une autre cause, cause externe, c'est-à-dire le père (…) les causes universelles dont nous parlions n'existent donc pas. Le principe des individus, en effet, c'est l'individu ; de l'homme en général ne sortirait que l'homme en général, mais l'homme en général n'est pas ; c'est Pélée qui est le principe d'Achille » (trad. J. Tricot).

Cette note réunit trois arguments : 1) si la cause première agissait directement dans le causé, la cause seconde serait inutile, ce qui ressemble à première vue à un paralogisme (car la cause seconde pourrait avoir un effet différent de celui de la cause première) mais qui s'appuie peut-être sur Thomas citant Proclus, *Elementatio theologica*, 56 : *Omne quod a secundis producitur, et a prioribus et causalioribus producitur eminentius, a quibus et secunda producebantur*, Saffrey, p. 5, l. 18-20, ce qui donnerait à penser que la cause seconde soit seulement plus faible que la cause première ; toutefois, l'objection suppose d'ignorer la suite du commentaire de Thomas aussi bien que l'exemple cité par le développement de la proposition (Pattin, §§ 6-11), pourtant figurant peu après le lieu de

77 Trois lettres au bord de la marge, peut-être exponctuées, illisibles.

cette intervention dans le texte hébreu ; 2) la puissance que possède la matière de la chose, sa prédisposition[78], n'a pas de place dans le schéma proposé : on ne peut dire qu'elle est première, car elle est le début plutôt que la cause, et l'on ne peut dire qu'elle est dernière (puisque préexistante)[79] ; 3) l'action lointaine ne rend pas compte des particuliers. Il n'est pas impossible de la retrouver, comme les précédentes, parmi les questions que posent Gilles de Rome[80] ou Siger de Brabant[81] et, hors la forme de question, chez Thomas[82], deux d'entre elles, même, déjà chez Ps. Henri de Gand[83].

1/b.

> קשיא. הדם והליחות הם הסיבה הקרובה, והחומר הקרוב [! **צ״ל** הרחוקה] לאברים, והמזונות סבת הלחות והיסודות סבת המזונות, כלומר, מן הצמחים. נציע שהדם והלחות יעדרו מן האברים, מה יהיה השפע או הכח שישפע עליהם מאת היסודות, ומה סבה יהיה אליהן?

> Objection : le sang et les humeurs sont la cause prochaine et la matière, la lointaine[84], des membres, et les aliments cause des humeurs, et les éléments cause des aliments, c'est-à-dire des végétaux. Supposons que le sang et les humeurs soient absents des membres, quel sera l'épanchement ou la puissance qui épanchera sur eux à partir des éléments, quelle cause s'exercera sur eux ?

78 Aristote, *Métaphysique*, Θ (IX), 1, 1046a, 10-15, puissance passive ; 6, 1048a, 25-35.

79 Aristote, *Métaphysique*, Θ (IX), 8, 1049b, 3-5 : « De nos considérations (Δ, 11, 1018b 9-1019a 14) sur les différentes acceptions de l'antérieur, il résulte clairement que l'acte est antérieur à la puissance » (trad. J. Tricot).

80 v. *supra*, n. 57.

81 Siger de Brabant, *Quaestiones super in Librum de causis*, p. 36-41, q. 1, *Vtrum causa primaria plus influat et magis sit causa effectus causae secundariae quam ipsa causa secundaria*, et q. 2, *Vtrum causa primaria naturaliter possit producere effectum causae secundariae sine causa secundaria* (qui reçoit une réponse négative) ; p. 51-55, q. 5, *Vtrum forma communior sit prior et forma minus communis sit posterior* ; q. 6, *Vtrum forma magis communis sit magis causa quam forma minus communis* ; peut-être q. 7, *Vtrum cum aliquod individuum hominis non est remaneat animal*.

82 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 9, l. 10-11.

83 (Ps.-)Henri de Gand, *Quaestiones in Librum de causis*, q. 9 et 10, à propos du déficit de la cause première par rapport à la seconde, éd. Zwaenepoel, p. 33-36 ; q. 11, que la première ne saurait opérer sans la seconde, p. 37. L'édition date ce commentaire entre 1245 et 1255 (p. 15).

84 L'hébreu porte par erreur : « la prochaine » ; ce qui est ici nommé « la matière » correspond à ce qui est appelé « les éléments » dans la suite de cette note.

On montre ici, sur un exemple médical, la nécessité des causes secondes en tant qu'intermédiaires ; cette objection s'ajoute aux trois précédentes.

2. Une note marginale, f. 75v, explique le mot « horizon » translittéré dans le corps du texte (§ 22 : *L'existence qui est après l'éternité et au-dessus du temps est l'âme, parce qu'elle est plus bas que l'horizon de l'éternité et au-dessus du temps*) en lettres hébraïques :

> פירוש: כמו העג[ו]לה הסוב[ב]ת את מבטינו מכל מה שנוכל לראות. וזה כמו דמיון לבד.
>
> Explication : comme le cercle qui circonscrit notre vue de tout ce que nous pouvons discerner, et c'est seulement à titre de comparaison.

3. Une note marginale, f. 76, après les mots : *et ainsi elle* [*l'âme supérieure*] *produira une action divine* (§ 32) :

> פירוש: בעבור שיש לה, בזו הפעולה של ההנעה, דמיון הכח האלהי, ועם היותה כלי השכל, תעשה פעולה שכלית [! **כנראה, צ״ל** אלהית].
>
> « Explication : parce qu'il y a dans cette action de motion une ressemblance avec la puissance divine, bien qu'elle ne soit qu'un instrument de l'intellect, elle opère une action divine », où le copiste, peut-être choqué par l'idée, en tout cas à la faveur d'une ressemblance paléographique entre les deux mots hébreux, a écrit « une action intellectuelle », ce qui ne serait qu'une lapalissade. Cette note ne fait guère plus que répéter le texte ; peut-être voudrait-elle résoudre la difficulté due au glissement de la notion d'action « divine » à celle d'action « intellectuelle », éventuellement due à une erreur dans la tradition latine (l'éd. Pattin [§§ 32-33] semble témoigner d'un semblable glissement).

10(11)/12/a.

> אמ׳ הלל: מזו ההקדמה ופירושו הוציא[ו?] שהחכמה אינה אלא בעניינים הבלתי נפסדים, ומזה רצו לדקדק ולהוכיח שהרפואה אינה חכמה. ואין זו קושיא, שבאמת אינינה חכמה סתם, אבל היא חכמה מודיע דבר פלוני, ויותר ראוי שתכונה בשם ידיעה. ולכן אמר אבן צינא שהיא חכמה פועלת ובספרו הגדול אמר: היא חכמה שממנה תוכר תכונת הגוף האנושי כו׳, אבל לא חכמה סתם. ועוד לזה יש תירוץ אחר, ע[יין] ב[ו].

> Hillel a dit : de cette proposition [*Tout intellect pense les choses perpétuelles qui ne périssent ni ne tombent sous le temps*] et de son explication on a tiré qu'il n'y a de science que de ce qui ne se corrompt pas et de là on a voulu faire une distinction et montrer que la médecine n'est pas une science. Il n'y a pas là de difficulté car, en vérité, elle n'est pas une science au sens absolu (*stam* = simpliciter ?), mais science en ce qu'elle donne à connaître quelque chose, et qu'il conviendrait mieux de la qualifier du terme de connaissance. C'est pourquoi Avicenne a dit[85] qu'elle était une science pratique et dans son grand livre (le *Canon*) il a déclaré qu'elle « était la science grâce à laquelle on connaissait la disposition du corps humain », etc.[86], mais non une science tout court ; et cela peut se résoudre encore autrement, voir ce [qu'il en a écrit].

Lui-même médecin, Hillel note immédiatement une conséquence bien éloignée du mouvement métaphysique du texte qu'il traduit et étudie.

10(11)/12/b.

אמנם פירוש זו ההקדמה הוא נגד האמונה ואין לסמוך עליו.

> Cependant l'explication de cette proposition est contraire à la foi et il n'y a pas à s'appuyer sur elle[87].

Ce jugement porte logiquement sur la partie omise du développement (début du § 101), dont n'a été expressément rapportée que la fin (« Le commentateur dit à la fin de l'explication, avec force »). Cette dernière glose reprend sans doute Thomas d'Aquin, mais renvoie par là non, comme lui, au théorème (§ 100 : *Tout intellect pense les choses éternelles qui ne sont pas détruites ni ne tombent sous le temps*)[88], mais au développement omis (Solère : *si l'intelligence*

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85 Avicenne, *Urjûzat fî t-tibb* (« Poème sur la médecine ») : « La médecine est [l'art de] conserver la santé et éventuellement de guérir les maladies survenues dans le corps » : *Medicina est conservatio sanitatis et curatio aegritudinis… cuius prima divisio est, in theoricam et practicam* (Avicenne, *Poème sur la médecine*, éd. G. Rhau, Wittenberg, 1562, f. A5v).

86 Avicenne, *Canon*, 1.1.1.1 : « La médecine est une science par laquelle on connaît les manières dont le corps humain se comporte et évolue, du point de vue de ce qui est en bonne santé ou de ce qui altère sa santé, en vue de préserver intégralement la santé et de la restaurer, le cas échéant, lorsqu'elle est déficiente ».

87 Cette note est inscrite dans le texte (f. 78r) parallèlement à la précédente ; il se peut que le *Amar Hillel* qui les précède vaille pour l'une et l'autre.

88 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 73, l. 4-5 : *signanter autem dicit 'quae*

est toujours ce qui n'est pas mû, elle est alors cause pour les choses perpétuelles, qui ne sont pas détruites ni changées et ne tombent pas sous la génération et la corruption). On pourrait donc supposer un recours au commentaire de Gilles de Rome, qui conteste le même point que Thomas mais à propos du début du développement (f. 39v) et non du théorème. Contrairement à ce que donne à penser la formule, la partie omise est très brève : « en effet, si l'intellect est ce qui ne se meut pas, il est la cause de choses éternelles qui ne périssent pas et ne sont pas soumises à la génération et à la corruption » ; il s'agit peut-être de refuser que l'intellect, et non Dieu même, soit la cause des choses éternelles, autrement dit de refuser une thèse de la création « par l'intermédiaire de l'intellect », d'origine plotinienne, que Cristina D'Ancona a jugée caractéristique du *De causis* et qui permettait de concilier la causalité par création et la causalité par information[89]. Mais la difficulté s'éclaire autrement par le biais du commentaire de Thomas, auquel la formule de condamnation doit être empruntée[90], et qui explicite les conséquences ruineuses de cette position : si les productions de l'intellect étaient éternelles, les anges ne pourraient causer d'innovation dans le cours des choses, Dieu moins encore, et le monde serait éternel[91].

14(15)/14.

> אמר הלל: המפרש האריך הנה בדברים יתרים שהם מעורבבים, ולכן לא כתבתים, כי כולם הם נכנסים בידיעת [!] מן השכל והמשכיל והמושכל, שהם דבר אחד בעצמו או פורש [! **צ״ל** ומפורש] היטב בספר הששה התחלות לאבונצר, ונתן בזה משל האור והראות והשמש, ועיין שם. גם רבינו משה באר זה היטב בהשכלת האילן.

La note suit ce passage du *Liber de causis*[92] : [§ 124. *Tout connaissant connaît son existence ; aussi fait-il retour vers elle d'un retour total.* ~~§ 125. (trad. Solère) : *La raison en est que la connaissance n'est rien d'autre qu'une action intelligible. Lors donc que l'être connaissant connaît sa propre essence, il revient à elle par son*~~

non destruuntur neque cadunt sub tempore', où il s'agit de la fin de la proposition proprement dite ; à propos de *signanter* v. *supra*, n. 59.

89 Cf. D'Ancona 1995, p. 73-95.

90 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 74, l. 25-26 : *Hac enim probatione suscepta, multa fundamenta catholicae fidei tollerentur*. Ce parallèle et celui du *signanter* précédent avaient été signalés par Steinschneider 1863, p. 111, n. 2.

91 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 74, l. 7–p. 75, l. 2 : *sequeretur enim quod angeli nihil de novo in his inferioribus immediate facere possent, et multo minus Deus qui non solum est aeternus, sed ante aeternitatem, ut supra dictum est, et sequeretur ulterius mundum semper fuisse*.

92 Sont rayées les phrases du texte latin courant omises par le traducteur hébreu.

~~*opération intelligible.*~~ § 126. *Et cela ne peut être, sinon parce que le connaissant et le connu sont chose une* [...] *sa substance fait donc retour à son essence.* ~~§§ 127–128. *La raison en est la suivante : étant donné que la connaissance est science du connaissant* [...] *substance simple et se suffisant à soi*~~]. (Ces deux derniers §§ ainsi remplacés dans la traduction hébraïque de Hillel, où se reconnaît encore l'essentiel du § 127 : *Ainsi il le connaît parce qu'il est connaissant et qu'ainsi sa substance revient sur sa propre substance. Et cela advient parce que la connaissance n'est pas autre chose qu'une action intelligente*). – « Hillel a dit : le commentateur s'est étendu ici en choses superflues et confuses, c'est pourquoi je ne les ai pas écrites ; elles relèvent toutes de la connaissance de l'intellect, de l'intelligent et de l'intelligible qui sont substantiellement une seule chose et c'est bien expliqué dans le livre des *Six Principes* d'al-Fārābī qui donne à ce propos l'exemple de la lumière, de la vue et du soleil, qu'on s'y reporte[93] ; notre maître Moïse [Maïmonide] l'a aussi bien exposé à propos de l'intellection de ces choses[94] ».

L'annotateur ramène ici de manière expéditive l'inconnu au connu sans s'arrêter aux « choses superflues et confuses » qui témoignent peut-être d'une doctrine quelque peu différente de celle de Maïmonide et de ces sources, à en juger par la pluralité de propositions des *Éléments de théologie* de Proclus que saint Thomas cite ici dans son propre commentaire.

15(16)/15 (après le § 129 : *Toutes les puissances qui sont infinies dépendent du premier infini qui est la puissance des puissances. Non parce qu'elles sont* [au pluriel, selon une variante attestée chez Pattin et notée par Solère] *fixées dans les choses existantes, mais elles sont dans les choses existantes qui possèdent* [*de ce fait ?*] *la fixité*).

אמר הלל: דברי הפירוש בזה הוא נבוך לבלי צורך, ולכן לא כתבתים.

> Hillel a dit : le propos de l'explication ici s'égare sans nécessité, c'est pourquoi je ne l'ai pas rapporté.

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93 Al-Fārābī, *Sefer ha-hatḥalot* (éd. Filipowski), p. 4-5 : où la métaphore évoquée par Hillel (il s'agit de la manière dont l'intellect agent rend l'homme capable de comprendre à la manière dont le soleil, par sa lumière, rend la vue capable de voir cette lumière même et sa source) est la fin d'un long développement sur la manière dont chaque degré d'intelligence est capable d'intelliger ce qui est au-dessus de lui, par le fait même que celui-ci l'intellige, et les autres intelligibles.

94 Moïse Maïmonide, *Le guide des égarés*, I, 68, trad. Munk, t. I, p. 301-312.

Cette note encore confirme l'identité du traducteur et de l'annotateur. Quant à ce qui a pu l'indisposer dans le développement de cette proposition, ce pourrait être cette notion très néoplatonicienne des puissances créées mais infinies : aux §§ 130-136, il n'est encore question que de l'intellect premier créé, mais au § 137 s'affirme à plein, et comme nulle part ailleurs dans l'opuscule, le statut similaire des « bontés simples telles que la vie et la lumière », intermédiaires de l'effusion à partir de la Cause première qui portent atteinte à l'idée de la création une et directement opérée par Dieu seul.

16(17)/16 (après les §§ 138-142 : *Toute puissance unifiée est plus infinie que la puissance multiple*, etc.).

> אמר הלל: הגירסה זאת מן ההקדמה וגם פירושה אינם נכוחים, וזהו בעבור שהוא נותן הסבה במה שהוא בלתי תכליתו [**אולי צ״ל** תכליתי] בעבור היותו מאוחד. והנה, אין זו ראייה מכרחת בעד סבה אחת לבד, בעבור שהדבר שיש לו סבות רבות לא יתגלמת בהכרח בעד סבה אחת לבד, אלא אם תהיה אותה האחת סבה עצמיית וקרוב אליו מאד. והסבה העצמיית לדבר הצוריית, אינה אלא אחת לבד: והמשל בזה בריבוי הסבות הוא כאמרך: ״זה האיש נתחמם מאד״, בעבור שאנחנו לא נחייב אליו זה החימום רק מן צד ההתקרב אל האש, ואומרים: ״אם נתחמם, אם כן קרב אל האש״, בעבור שאפשר שיתחמם גם בצד סבות אחרות מחממות, כמו מתנועה מופלגת או ממזן חם או ממשקה חם או מאויר חם. כן העניין במה שחייבה ההקדמה, כלומר היות הדבר בלא תכלית בעבור היותו מאוחד. שהרי אין זאת אלא [**! צריך למחוק את מלת** אלא] סבה עצמיית, כי אפשר שיהיה לא תכלית בעבור היותו ראשון לכל הנמצאים, שכל מה שהוא ראשון בזה הוא לא תכליתו [**! צ״ל** תכליתי] על כל פנים, כי לא יצוייר שם תכלית מזמן ולא ממקום. וכן מה שהיא צורה נבדלת לגמרי משום חומר, הוא בלתי תכליתי בהכרח. וכן נמי, מה שהוא סבה ראשונה לכל הסבות, יתחייב שיהיה לא תכליתי. וכן הנצחות [279ב] יחייב היות הדבר לא תכליתי: אם כן, אין ההתאחדות סבה עצמיית להיות הדבר לא תכליתי. ואם תאמר שההתאחדות היא היא שסבבה את כל אלה, כלומר היות הדבר ראשון והיותו צורה נבדלת והיותו סבה ראשונה, לזה אסרב, שהאחדות אינם [**! צ״ל** אינה] סבה עצמיית לצוריית [**! צ״ל** וצוריית] לראשונות, בעבור שהאחדות, הראשונות והאחד והראשון הם מתהפכים בנושא זה לזה: שכל מה שהוא אחד פשוט בתכלית האחדות והפשיטות, הוא ראשון בהכרח, וכל מה שהוא ראשון בתכלית הראשונות, הוא אחד בהכרח. וזה התבאר מאד בשרשי [**אולי צ״ל** שלישי] אחר הטבע ואבונצר בספרו בהתחלות הראה זה בנגלה, ועיין שם. אם כן, אין אחד מהם סבה ראשונה או עצמיית צוריית לאחר, שכל מה שהוא על זה האופן, לא יאמר בו שהוא סבה עצמיית לחבירו, בעבור שכל מה שהוא סבה עצמיית צוריית לדבר, הוא סבה מיוחדת מסוגלת אל אותו לבדו, בל ישתתף בו עם זולתו בעניין שיהיה לזולתו גם כן סבה זאת הסבה בסגולה אליו, שאם כן תהיה סבה אחת צוריית בפועל שתי סבות צוריות בפועל לדבר אחד בפועל. ואם תאמר שהם יהיו שני דברים בפועל, אך יהיו להם גם כן שתי סבות צוריות בפועל, כל סבה מסוגלת ומיוחדת אל מסובבה, ואם תכחש זה ותודה באחר,

יולד מזה שנאמר שיהיה איפשר היות עצם אחד בפועל בעל שני עצמים בפועל, ושיהיה קו אחד בפועל בעל שני חצאי קוים בפועל: וכל זה נמנע, כאמור בי״א מאחר הטבע. אם כן, אין האחדות הוא סבה סגוליית וצורייית להיות הדבר הראשון, יותר מהיות גם כן הראשון הוא סבה אל האחדות, אצל [! **צ״ל** אבל] מחיוב המצא אחד מאלה הוא שימצא האחר, כאמרך האחדות תחייב הראשונות והראשונות את האחדות, ושיהיה נבדל עומד בעצמו ונצחי ובלתי גוף ובלתי תכלית, וכולם מתהפכים זה על זה, באופן חיוב היות דבר [80א] עם דבר ולא באופן היות סבת דבר מדבר, ואין אחד מהם קודם לחבירו בזמן ולא במציאות. ופעם יהיה דבר אחד סבת דבר אחר, ועם כל זה לא יקדום אחד לאחר: והמשל בזה החום עם האש והצל עם הגוף והיום עם אור השמש. שאף על פי שאמרו היות אחד מהם סבה לאחר, עם כל זה אין אחד מהם ~~סבה~~ קודם לאחר, ושניהם נמצאים יחדיו. ומה שאמרו שמאן רבינו משה נמשל החום עם האש והצל מן [! **צ״ל** עם] הגוף, אין ענין למה שאנחנו [...] עתה ולא שייך עמו פירוש, והמבין יורה. נולד מכל זה, שאין האחדות סבה סגוליית אל הבלתי תכלית ולא יוקח ממנה ראייה, כמו שחשב [!] המחבר והמפרש, אבל שאר דברי הפירוש נכונים, ואומרים שהאחדות תחייב את הראשונות והראשונות את האחדות. אל יקשה לך ממציאות מספר השכלים הנבדלים בעבור שכל אחד מהם הוא ראשון פשוט בעצמו ואחד פשוט במציאותו העצמיית: ותדע שהאחד הפשוט האמיתי לא ימצא ממנו אלא פשוט אחד לבד והשכל הראשון לבדו מאת הראשון, ולא יותר ומן השכל הראשון התחייב השני וכן כלם גל״ה [? **אולי צ״ל**: [עד] גלגל התחתון].

Hillel a dit : cette version de la proposition ainsi que son commentaire ne sont pas justes. Il (!) donne en effet comme cause de l'infinité [d'une puissance] son unité et ce n'est pas une preuve nécessaire, car une chose qui a des causes multiples ne prend pas corps nécessairement à cause d'une seule, à moins qu'elle ne soit essentielle et cause très proche de cette chose. Et la cause substantielle de la chose, [et] qui [lui] est formelle, est unique. L'exemple, à cet égard, de la pluralité des causes est si l'on dit que tel homme a très chaud en n'attribuant cette chaleur qu'à sa proximité du feu[95], disant que s'il a chaud, c'est qu'il est près du feu ; or, il se peut qu'il ait chaud pour d'autres causes échauffantes comme un mouvement exagéré, une nourriture chaude, un breuvage chaud, un air chaud. Il en va de même de cette causalité posée par la proposition, à savoir que la chose soit infinie par suite de son unité, alors que ce n'en est que [! *scil.* : ce n'en est pas] la cause essentielle, car il se peut qu'elle soit infinie parce qu'elle est première de tous les existants, car tout ce qui est premier en cela est infini, car on ne s'en figure pas la fin dans le

95 Élaboration à partir de l'exemple du feu, source de toute chaleur, donné dans le commentaire de saint Thomas à la prop. 17(18), éd. Saffrey, p. 102, l. 7-8.

temps ni dans l'espace ; de même ce qui est forme entièrement séparée de toute matière est infini nécessairement ; de même encore ce qui est cause première de toutes les causes est nécessairement infini ; de même l'éternité (f. 79v) implique que la chose soit infinie. Ainsi, l'unité n'est pas cause essentielle de l'infinité de la chose. Et si l'on dit que l'unité est justement ce qui a causé tout cela, c'est-à-dire que la chose soit première, qu'elle soit une forme séparée et qu'elle soit cause première, je refuse [en répondant] à cela que l'unité ne sont (*sic*) pas cause essentielle et formelle pour la primauté, parce que l'unité et la primauté et l'un et le premier sont substituables (*mithafekhim*) dans un sujet l'un à l'autre ; car tout ce qui est un [et] simple d'une unité et d'une simplicité absolues est nécessairement premier, et tout ce qui est absolument premier est nécessairement un, ce qui est très bien expliqué au l. III de la *Métaphysique*[96] ; al-Fārābī, dans son livre des *Principes*, l'a montré clairement, qu'on s'y reporte[97]. Dans ces conditions, aucun d'entre ces [principes] n'est cause première ou essentielle-formelle d'un autre ; car tout ce qui est de la sorte, on ne dira pas qu'il est cause essentielle de l'autre, car tout ce qui est cause essentielle-formelle d'une chose est une cause particulière, propre à elle seule, associée avec rien d'autre de sorte que cette cause serait aussi sa cause particulière, car alors une seule cause formelle en acte en serait deux pour une seule chose en acte. Et si l'on dit qu'il y a deux choses en acte mais qu'elles ont aussi deux causes formelles en acte, chaque cause [étant] propre et particulière à son causé, ou si l'on nie cette [dernière proposition] et que l'on affirme l'autre, il en résultera que nous dirons qu'il sera possible qu'une seule substance en acte comporte deux substances en acte et qu'une droite en acte comporte deux demi-droites en acte, et tout cela est impossible, comme il est dit au l. XI de la *Métaphysique*[98]. Dès lors, l'unité n'est pas plus la cause particulière et formelle de la primauté d'une chose que sa primauté n'est elle-même cause de

96 Si notre correction de la leçon pourtant plausible elle-même du ms., *šoršey* (« les principes »), en *šeliši* (« le [l.] III ») est justifiée. La référence pourrait être alors à B (III) 999ab ou 1001ab où il est question plusieurs fois du caractère premier de l'un.

97 Éd. cit., p. 1, mais qui formule l'implication inverse : « ce qui est premier ne peut être pluriel, mais seulement un et simple » (ומה שבמדריגה הראשונה אי אפשר שיהיה הרבה אלא אחד פשוט לבד).

98 Aristote, *Métaphysique*, K(XI), 2, 1060b 5 sqq., sur la critique de ceux qui identifient le premier principe à l'un ; 10,1066b 10 sqq., sur la non-divisibilité de l'infini en acte (muettement informé par la demi-droite en puissance dans la droite entière, *Métaphysique*, Θ(VIII), 1048a 30-35 et peut-être par l'exemple des deux demi-droites en Aristote, *Physique*, VIII, 12, 10 sqq., en part. 25).

[son] unité, mais c'est la présence de l'une qui rend l'autre nécessaire ; pour ainsi dire, l'unité implique la primauté et la primauté, l'unité, et que [celui qui les possède] soit séparé, subsistant par lui-même, éternel, sans corps, sans limite, et tous [ces attributs] sont substituables l'un à l'autre selon le mode de la nécessité que l'un (f. 80r) accompagne l'autre, et non selon celui de la causalité de l'un par rapport à un autre. Et l'un n'est pas antérieur à l'autre dans le temps ni dans l'existence ; quelquefois une chose sera cause d'une autre, sans pour autant que l'une soit antérieure à l'autre, à l'exemple de la chaleur avec le feu, de l'ombre avec le corps et du jour avec la lumière du soleil : bien que l'on dise que l'un est la cause de l'autre, néanmoins l'un n'est pas antérieur à l'autre et tous deux existent ensemble[99]. Et pour ce qu'on a dit[100] que notre maître Moïse (Maïmonide) avait refusé la comparaison[101] de la chaleur avec le feu et de l'ombre avec le corps, ce n'est pas ce dont nous [traitons] à présent et il n'y a pas lieu de le commenter ; qui réfléchit le reconnaîtra. De tout cela résulte que l'unité n'est pas cause particulière de l'infinité et qu'on n'en tire pas non plus une preuve [de celle-ci] comme l'ont pensé l'auteur et le commentateur ; mais le reste du commentaire est juste en disant que l'unité nécessite la primauté et la primauté, l'unité. Qu'on n'objecte pas à partir de l'existence d'une pluralité d'intellects séparés, parce que chacun d'eux est premier et simple en sa substance et un et simple en son existence essentielle ; qu'on sache qu'à partir de l'un simple véritable rien n'existe que de simple et un, et le premier intellect seul à partir du Premier, rien

99 Cf. Moïse Maïmonide, *Le guide des égarés*, I, 53, t. I, p. 205-216 (ch. 51-60, p. 182-266), sur ce que les attributs ne sont pas séparés en Dieu mais ne font que décrire pour les hommes les actions diverses procédant d'une vertu unique. Il en résulte évidemment l'absence de dépendance de l'un par rapport aux autres. C'est peut-être de ce même refus de distinguer en Dieu des attributs essentiels que Hillel tire l'objection rapportée ensuite au nom de Maïmonide contre la métaphore du feu et du chaud qui, comme il le dit, ne regarde pas la présente question d'une éventuelle hiérarchie des attributs.

100 Nous traduisons comme si Hillel évoquait, en employant un hendiadys, une position de Maïmonide qui pourrait sembler une objection ; il ne paraît pourtant pas entièrement exclu que le texte, qui dit littéralement « pour ce qu'ils ont dit que Maïmonide avait refusé », réponde ici à un adversaire invisible, un autre expositeur juif du *Liber de causis* (Maïmonide ne se réfère évidemment pas au *Liber*) ou quelque contradicteur déjà affronté sur le même sujet hors référence au *De causis*. – L'objection contre ces métaphores au nom de Maïmonide peut provenir soit de son refus de distinguer des attributs d'essence en Dieu (v. note précédente), soit de son refus de toute ressemblance entre lui et les choses (I, 55, t. I, p. 225-226) au profit des seuls attributs négatifs (I, 58, t. I, p. 240-247) ; mais Maïmonide n'a pas lui-même employé ces comparaisons.

101 Ce terme fait difficulté : il désigne d'habitude le terme comparé, non la comparaison.

> de plus ; et que du premier intellect suit nécessairement le second, et tous de même [jusqu'à la sphère inférieure][102].

Cette note a été suffisamment commentée dans la présentation générale et dans les notes de bas de page précédentes.

17(18)/17a. Résume les §§ 144 et 148, premier et dernier, du développement de la proposition (qui énonce, au § 143 : *Toutes les choses ont une existence, c'est-à-dire une essence, du fait de l'existant premier, et toutes les choses sont vivantes et se meuvent du fait de son existence et de sa vie*[103]*, et toutes les choses intellectives possèdent la science du fait du premier intellect*) :

> אמר המפרש: בכאן נתן כמו חק אחד לחיינו ואמר שהחיים הם ריבוי אחד טוב שמתרבה מטוב ראשון שהוא נצב ונצחי סלה, ובהמצאו נותן כל העניינים התולים בעד הטוב, ונותנם באופן סבה או מסבב. אמנם החיים הראשונים הוא נותן אל מה שלמטה ממנו, לא לבד באופן סבותיי אלא לפי אופן צורה.
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> Le commentateur [des théorèmes] a dit : ici, il a donné comme une définition unique à notre vie, en disant que la vie est la multiplication d'un bien qui se multiplie à partir du Bien premier qui est fixe et perpétuel à tout jamais et qui par son existence dispense tout ce qui dépend du bien, à titre de cause ou de cause de cause ; cependant, il donne la vie première à ce qui est en-dessous de lui non seulement de manière causale mais [aussi] de manière formelle.

Nous voyons ici un indice de ce que ce type d'intervention est le fait de l'auteur des notes critiques : en effet, ce résumé évite avec soin les formules que la note suivante va mettre en question et insiste d'avance sur la distinction qu'elle va avancer, en énonçant que d'un Bien premier immuable procèdent tous les biens, parmi lesquels la vie, dont le nom (un pluriel, en hébreu) indique lui-même le processus de dispensation par l'Un parmi la multiplicité des choses créées.

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102 Lecture conjecturale et peu sûre : « et tous de même » est suivi d'un acronyme *g.l.h.* qui peut se lire *galgal ha-taḥaton*, « la sphère inférieure », mais la préposition alors nécessaire (*'ad*, « jusqu'à ») ne figure pas.

103 Semble supposer dans le modèle latin, au lieu de « et res vivae omnes *sunt* motae per essentiam suam propter vitam *primam* », « et res vivae omnes *et* motae per essentiam suam propter vitam *suam* », variantes non signalées par Pattin et par Magnard *et alii*.

17(18)/17b. Ajoute ce commentaire critique :

> אמר הלל: באמרו "בעד חייו", הוא דבור המשלי ודמיוני בּ [**בשולים** בדרך] הרחבת הלשון. כי לא יתכן לומר בשם ית׳ שיש לו חיים, שהרי הוא מקור החיים והוא חי ולא בחיים, כי הוא הוא החיים ית׳. וגדרו האמתי מן החיים הוא שהם פועל תמידי (280ב) מנפש בגוף מנופש, ויש לחיים גם כן גדרים אחרים.
>
> Hillel a dit : lorsque [le commentateur] énonce « à cause de (*baʿad*) sa vie », c'est une façon de parler en parabole et en figure, en un sens large, car il n'y a pas lieu de dire, à propos de Dieu, qu'il possède une vie, car il est la source de la vie et il est [le] vivant (*ḥay*)[104] et non dans la vie ; il est lui-même la vie. La vraie définition de la vie est d'être une action permanente (80v) d'une âme sur un corps animé[105] ; la vie a encore d'autres définitions.

Hillel introduit une distinction entre vie divine et vie humaine, la première étant ainsi nommée de manière figurée, conformément à la distinction et à la formulation maïmonidiennes[106], mais peut-être, ici, réactivées à la lecture du commentaire de saint Thomas[107]. À cela il oppose la définition « vraie », c'est-à-dire au sens propre, de la vie, qui suppose la présence d'un corps (d'après le *De anima* ?), ajoutant qu'il en est d'autres (médicales ?). Il identifie décidément la Cause première à Dieu[108].

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104 Cet adjectif a la particularité d'avoir par rapport au nom de la vie l'apparence morphologique d'un singulier par rapport à un pluriel ; ainsi il apparaît plutôt comme son principe unitaire que comme son dérivé. Hillel se souvient sans doute aussi de la mise en garde de Maïmonide contre l'idée d'attributs de Dieu (v. *supra*, prop. 16 [17]), répétée par lui précisément à propos de son caractère de « vivant » (par essence), et non « doué de vie », Moïse Maïmonide, *Le guide des égarés*, I, 68, t. I, p. 302-303.

105 Cf. Aristote, *De anima*, II, 1, 412a12-412b, 413a10 ?

106 Moïse Maïmonide, *Le guide des égarés*, I, 57, t. I, p. 232, à propos des supposés attributs d'essence : « il est toujours d'une existence nécessaire […] il existe, mais non par l'existence, et de même il vit, mais non par la vie, il peut, mais non par la puissance, et il sait, mais non par la science ».

107 Thomas d'Aquin, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, p. 102, l. 4-24, en part. 16-17, citant Proclus (*Elementatio theologica*, 102) : *Omnia viventia suiipsorum motiva sunt propter vitam primam*.

108 Se conformant en cela au *Livre des principes* d'al-Fārābī, éd. cit., p. 1 : « du premier, il convient de croire qu'il est Dieu, et il est la cause première, [cause] prochaine de l'existence des seconds [existants] et de celle de l'intellect agent » (והראשון הוא אשר ראוי שיאמן בו שהוא האל והוא הסבה הראשונה הקרובה למציאות השניים ומציאות השכל הפועל).

18(19)/18 (après le §149 : *Parmi les intellects, il y a l'intellect divin, ceux qui reçoi*[*ven*]*t des biens premiers divins qui proviennent de la Cause première, d'une réception abondante ; et les intellects simples*, etc.).

אמר הלל: ההקדמה הזאת לא צריכה פירוש.

Hillel a dit : cette proposition ne requiert pas d'explication.

Aussi en a-t-il omis le développement (§§150-154).

19(20)/19 (après le §155 : *La Cause première régit toutes les choses créées sans se mêler aucunement à elles*).

אמר הלל: זו אינה צריכה פירוש.

Hillel a dit : celle-ci ne requiert pas d'explication.

Et il a omis les §§156-161.

20(21)/20 (après le §162 : *Le Premier est pour ainsi dire riche par lui-même et il n'est pas de richesse supérieure à la sienne*).

אמר הלל: גם זה הדיבור משלי: באומרו "עשיר ועושר" ירצה בו משפיע שפע.

Hillel a dit : c'est là encore une expression figurée : par 'riche' et 'richesse' on veut dire 'celui qui épanche' [et] 'épanchement'.

Cette remarque le dispense apparemment de traduire le développement (§§163-165).

21(22)/21.

אמר הלל: זאת גם כן אינה צריכה פירוש.

Hillel a dit : celle-ci non plus ne requiert pas d'explication.

Il a amalgamé, pour formuler la proposition, le §166 et le début du §167 en ajoutant encore la notion de cause qui ne figure pas (*La cause première est plus haute que toutes les causes et que tous les discours et ne connaît ni augmentation ni diminution*) ; il omet la suite du développement jusqu'au §171 inclus.

22(23)/22 (après le § 172 : *Tout intellect divin connaît les choses parce qu'il est un intellect et les dirige parce qu'il est divin*).

גם זאת ידוע. רצה בה להודיע באיזה אופן הוא (81א) משכיל ובאיזה הוא מנהיג.

Cela aussi est connu. Il a voulu faire connaître de quelle façon [l'intellect divin] intellige et régit.

Omission des §§ 173-175.

23(24)/23a (§ 176 : *La Cause première est en toutes choses selon une disposition unique*).

פירוש: לפי תכונה, נותנת ומשפעת כל הנמצא. ובזה האופן, ימצא כחה בכל העניינים על תכונה אחת.

Explication : selon [sa] disposition, donne et épanche tout l'existant. De la sorte, sa puissance se trouve en toutes choses selon une disposition unique.

23(24)/23b (suite : *mais toutes choses ne sont pas en elle selon une disposition unique*).

פירוש: כי הם עומדים ומתקיימים בעבורה רק לפי כח הכנת הקבלה במקבל ולא לפי אופן הנותן, שאם כן היו כלם דומים אליה בטובותיהם.

« Explication : [les existants] se maintiennent à cause d'elle, [mais] seulement selon la capacité de traiter ce qu'il reçoit qui se trouve dans le receveur, et non selon le donateur, car alors tous seraient semblables à elle [la Cause première] quant à leurs biens. » – Les §§ 177-180 ne sont pas traduits.

23(24)/23c. Remarque sur la plus grande appropriation à celle-ci du développement d'une autre proposition, non précisée. Il pourrait s'agir de la prop. 19(20), dont le développement avait été jugé superflu par l'annotateur : « La cause première dirige toutes les choses créées sans aucunement se mêler à elles » ; le développement visé serait alors celui des §§ 156-161.

ונראה לי שאותו הפירוש שפירש המפרש בהקדמת [!] היה יותר ראוי שיפורש בזו.

> Il me semble que l'explication donnée par le commentateur à la proposition [l'*incipit* ou un numéro sont omis] aurait été plus appropriée à celle-ci.

11(12)/24 (après le §103: *De tous les premiers, certains sont en d'autres de la manière dont l'un* [*peut?*] *être en un autre*).

> אמר הלל: נראה לפרש הנה הכחות, כלומר שקצת כחות הראשונים נכנסים בקצת כחות אחרים שהם ראשונים גם כן, כמו שום כח אחר ממדריגה אחת שכלית, נמצא שיהיה גם כן אחרת שכלית באופן שפע נוסף על שפע, ולא לבד שפע משפע.
>
> Hillel a dit: il semble qu'on doive expliquer ici les puissances en disant que certaines puissances premières entrent dans certaines autres puissances qui sont aussi premières; à la façon dont, [pour] une puissance quelconque d'un degré intelligible, il s'en trouvera aussi une autre, [également] intelligible, sur le mode d'un épanchement supplémentaire [spécifique?] et non simplement d'un épanchement d'un épanchement.

On peut se demander dans ce cas particulier si Hillel remplace ici délibérément le texte du développement (§§104-108) ou s'il n'en disposait pas (la proposition, déplacée, ayant pu être copiée sans lui en marge d'un modèle ou être saisie à la hâte à partir d'un autre manuscrit). Qu'il n'en dise mot et se montre hésitant sur l'objet de la proposition («il semble») irait dans le sens de la deuxième hypothèse. Cependant, le déplacement de cette proposition ici ne doit rien au hasard, comme il ressort des notes de Hillel lui-même à propos de celle-ci et de la suivante; mais il n'est pas possible de déterminer si le réarrangement est de son fait ou avait déjà été opéré dans son modèle latin. D'un autre côté, il est notable qu'alors que l'énoncé seul de la proposition (qu'une faculté est dans une autre selon le mode de celle-ci) n'évoquait qu'une sorte de convertibilité mutuelle, Hillel introduise l'idée de hiérarchie qui figurait bien dans le développement originel, comme s'il avait eu accès bel et bien à celui-ci. – En insistant en termes d'influx sur la particularité de chaque mode de présence d'une puissance en l'autre et en écartant l'explication par le seul influx d'influx, Hillel pourrait cependant faire écho à la fin du commentaire de Thomas (Saffrey p. 81, l. 10-12, mais en termes de *similitudines et species*), soit plus sûrement à Gilles de Rome (f. 41v, qui marque plus nettement la hiérarchie descendante que suppose l'«épanchement d'épanchement» dont parle Hillel et qui emploie *fluunt*). Le terme de «puissances» lui est propre, Thomas et Gilles parlant ici d'«intelligences». Il prendrait position personnellement sur un caractère de cette hiérarchie: elle ne serait pas dégressive par déperdition

à partir d'un épanchement unique, mais progressive, par enrichissement de l'influx premier par un apport propre des causes secondes. Ce pourrait être la continuation de la critique de la proposition 1 : le particulier ne serait pas plus pauvre que le général, mais plus riche que lui.

24(25)/25 (après le § 181 : *Les substances unes intellectives n'adviennent pas à partir d'autre chose*).

> פירוש "מדבר אחר": זולת שכל או נותן שכל בעצם זו מוסף על שכל. וזו דומה לאחרת, וכמעט היא כמו הבדל אחד לכלל ההוא ומפרש אותו.
>
> C'est-à-dire d'autre chose qu'un[e substance] intellect[ive] ou le donateur d'un surplus d'intelligence dans cette substance [intellective]. Cette proposition ressemble à l'autre [*sic, scil.* la précédente], [formule] presque comme une différence [= exception ?] par rapport à ce principe, et l'explique.

Noter la continuité avec la note de la proposition précédente. – L'« autre substance intellective » et le « donateur d'intelligence » (Dieu ?) se reconnaissent dans la « cause » évoquée par le développement originel (§ 185 : *Et non fit causa formationis suae et sui complementi nisi propter relationem suam ad causam suam semper*), comme l'exprimait plus clairement le développement de la prop. 11(12)/24 faisant référence à la hiérarchie des intelligences dont on parle. L'idée de la proposition et de son développement serait selon Hillel qu'une substance intelligible, quoiqu'indépendante de tout ce qui est à son niveau et inférieur à lui, est dans un rapport de dépendance causale vis-à-vis d'un autre intellect et, au-delà, de la source des intellects, et que cela mérite explicitation.

25(26)/26 (après le § 187 : *Aucune substance qui subsiste par elle-même ne tombe sous la corruption*).

> פירוש: ואם כן, אינו נהווה מדבר. וזו היא כמו חתימה אל האחרת.
>
> Commentaire : ainsi, elle n'advient pas [non plus] à partir d'autre chose. C'est comme une conclusion de l'autre [*sic; scil.*, la proposition précédente].

Manque à nouveau le développement (§§ 188-190). Il n'est peut-être pas nécessaire d'assigner à une référence précise et tacite (Aristote, *De generatione et corruptione*, I, 3 ?) la notion philosophique banale qu'une chose naît du dépé-

rissement d'une autre, et réciproquement, qui autorise l'annotateur à renvoyer de la non-corruption à la non-génération et retrouve l'énoncé de la proposition 24(25)/25.

26(27)/27 (après le § 191 : *Toute substance périssable et non éternelle est soit composée soit portée par autre chose*).

> פירוש: זו גם כן היא כמו הבדל אל האחרת, כלומר מן הדבר שאינו נהווה: כי זה שאמר בזו הוא נהווה, אינו נצחי, ולכן הוא מורכב או נשוא על דבר ואינו עומד בעצמו.
>
> Commentaire : ceci aussi est comme une différence par rapport à l'autre [la proposition précédente], c'est-à-dire [le cas de] la chose [substance] non engendrée, car celle dont il parle dans celle-ci est engendrée et non éternelle, elle est donc composée ou portée par quelque chose et non subsistante par soi.

Omet et résume le développement (§§ 192-193) en reprenant les deux formes de dépendance que celui-ci évoque (§ 192 : *aut est indigens rebus ex quibus est et est composita ex eis, aut est indigens in fixione sua et sua essentia deferente. Cum ergo separatur deferens eam, corrumpitur et destruitur*) et en précisant la différence ainsi marquée par rapport aux substances éternelles dont il a été question plus haut.

28(29)/29 (après le § 199 : *Toute substance simple subsiste par elle-même selon son essence* [*hawayato*]).

> אמר הלל: נראה לי שאלה שתי הקדמות הם כמו אחת, בעבור שהם מתהפכות זו לזו. כלומר, כל עצם שעומד בלא [! **צ״ל** בעד] הויית עצמו הוא פשוט, וכל עצם שהוא פשוט הוא עומד בעד הוית עצמו. ואמר ״לפי הוייתו״ בעבור שההויות של העצמים הפשוטים אינם כלם על אופן אחד בשוה, והויית העצם העומד בעד הויית עצמו פשוט, זה ידוע מאד, בעבור שהואיל והוא עומד בעצמו, אין שם הרכבה ולא נשיאות על דבר שם שבם [!] יעמוד.
>
> Hillel a dit : il me semble que ces deux [dernières] propositions ne sont qu'une, étant l'inverse l'une de l'autre, c'est-à-dire que toute substance qui subsiste à cause de (*baʿad*) l'essence[109] de sa substance est simple et que toute substance simple subsiste à cause de l'essence de sa sub-

109 *Hawwayah*, qui traduisait plus haut *generatio*, traduit cette fois, dans le texte même de la proposition, *essentia*.

> stance. [Le texte] a dit « selon (*lefi*) son essence » parce que les essences des substances simples ne sont pas toutes d'un même mode, à égalité, et que l'essence de la substance qui subsiste par sa propre essence simple, c'est bien connu, subsistant d'elle-même, ne comporte ni composition ni dépendance d'autre chose qui la fasse subsister.

Hillel semble forcer le sens de la proposition, qui portait *per essentiam suam*, « par » son essence, et non, « selon », c'est-à-dire en fonction des différences entre les essences. Il le fait dans l'esprit du corps du développement, qu'il n'a pas traduit (§§ 200-202) ; non plus que celui (§§ 195-198) de la prop. précédente (§ 194 : *Toute substance qui subsiste par son essence est simple et non divisée*), lequel oppose en effet, à nouveau, les substances subsistantes par leur essence à celles qui sont *generatae ex aliquo* (§ 201), mais contre le sens de la proposition et de la conclusion du développement, qui n'introduisent nulle division parmi les substances subsistantes par leur essence. Cette différence s'éclaire au vu du commentaire de Thomas, p. 134, l. 8-10, citant Proclus (où l'on trouve *secundum suam substantiam*, au lieu du *per substantiam* du *De causis*) ; Thomas opère aussi le rapprochement avec la proposition précédente (ibid., l. 1 : *Hic ponitur propositio conversa* [= *mithafekhoth*] *prioris*). Toutefois, alors que Thomas oppose des substances dépendantes du temps et d'autres, subsistantes par soi, Hillel s'en tient à l'opposition plus générale entre substances par soi et substances dépendantes d'autre chose.

29(30)/31 (après le § 203 : *Toute substance créée dans le temps ou est toujours dans le temps et le temps ne l'excède pas, ou n'est pas toujours dans le temps et le temps l'excède parce qu'elle est créée dans certains moments du temps*).

אמר הלל: זה מבואר.

> Hillel a dit : c'est évident.

Le substantiel développement (§§ 204-209) est omis.

30(31)/31 (après le § 210 : *Entre la chose dont la substance est dans un instant de l'éternité et la chose dont la substance et l'action sont dans un instant du temps il y a un intermédiaire : celle dont la substance est dans un instant de l'éternité et l'action dans un instant du temps*).

> אמר הלל: אותו האמצעי [!] הם האמצעיים שהם בין העולם הנצחי והעולם הנהווה והנפסד, כמו הגלגלים וקצת ממדרגות הנפשות. ואני רמזתי זה למעלה בשני ההקדמות שמתחל[ו]ת מן "השכלים" וכו'.

> Hillel a dit : cet intermédiaire, ce sont (*sic*) ceux qui se trouvent entre le monde éternel et celui de la génération et de la corruption, comme les sphères et certains des degrés des âmes. J'y ai fait allusion dans les [*scil.* à propos des] deux propositions qui commencent par 'Parmi les intellects', etc.[110].

Cela peut faire écho au commentaire de Thomas (p. 141, l. 10–p. 142, l. 3) qui envisage successivement cette position intermédiaire pour le *corpus caeleste* et pour l'âme ; toutefois, Thomas conclut à propos du premier qu'il ne relève que du temps ; et, quant à la seconde, il ne formule pas de restriction à « certains degrés ».

31(32)/32a (après le début du § 214 : *Il y a une substance qui tombe selon certaines de* [*ses*] *dispositions et qui est* (sic) *sous l'éternité et il y a une substance qui tombe selon certaines dispositions et qui est* (sic) *sous le temps*).

> הנופל תחת הנצחות הוא הוא שיאמר לו שהוא נמצא [**ממעל לשורה** פירוש] יש באמת, והנופל תחת הזמן הוא אותו שהוא מציאות באמת, והיש וההויה הם בזמן אחד בעצמו.

> Celui qui tombe sous l'éternité est celui dont on dit qu'il est existant, (c'est-à-dire), permanence, véritable et celui qui tombe sous le temps est celui qui est existence véritable ; et la permanence et le devenir sont en même temps dans sa (*sic*) substance.

Hillel, sans le dire, ou peut-être son modèle latin, résume lui-même le long développement de la proposition 32 en quelques mots qui identifient bien l'objet de la proposition, à savoir la co-existence de l'existence absolue, éternelle, et de l'existence en devenir, dans le temps, que l'énoncé de la proposition même, dans sa traduction ou dans le modèle de celle-ci, avait rendu inintelligible[111] ; le rétablissement se fait au prix d'une rupture dans la phrase

110 Il y en a trois : prop. 9(10), numérotée 14 dans le ms. de Hillel (f. 77v), et prop. 10(11) (num. 12 ; f. 78r), entre lesquelles s'insère la prop. 12(13), bien que numérotée 11 dans le ms. (f. 77v–78r). 9(10) seulement présente un commentaire (*supra*) en rapport allusif avec le point considéré, Hillel ajoutant que les intellects reçoivent l'épanchement de la Cause première, chacun selon ses capacités ; 10(11) ne comporte pas de commentaire ni de glose, 12(13) présente, on l'a vu, une brève notation sans rapport.

111 יש עצם שנופל בקצת התכונות והוא תחת הנצחות, ויש עצם שנופל בקצת תכונות והוא תחת הזמן ; v. *supra* la traduction du § 214.

de commentaire, qui semble parler d'abord de deux choses distinctes puis de la substance unique qui porte les deux modalités de l'existence, éternelle et dans le temps. Une intervention personnelle, comme d'habitude plus critique, fait suite à cette explication anonyme :

31(32)/32b.

> אמר הלל: איפשר לומר שזו האחרונה היא כמו פירוש אל אותה שלמעלה, ובא לפרש בה מה המה אותם העצמים שאמר לעיל. ועם כל זה היא צריכה פירוש לפירוש ועיון דק. ואמרו "היש וההויה הם בזמן אחד", כשיובאו אל חיבור אחד, כלומר שהיש יבא אל זמן. וכל הוייה היא יש משום צד, אמנם אין זה מהפך, כי כל יש אינו ישות או הויה [**בשוליים** פירוש: מציאות], בעבור שהיש הוא נפרד והישות היא מחוברת כאמרך הלובן והלבן. וההפרש שבין היש וההויה תמצא במאמר המחובר לכך שחבר פלוסוף אחד ונקרא מאמר המציאות והנמצא. ואני העתקתי ממנו קצת ומתחיל כך: "בעבור שלפי הפילוסוף בראשון מן השמים והעולם בטעות שהוא קטן בתחילה הוא מתגדל והוא גדול בסוף, ועוד, בעבור שנודע שהמציאות והנמצא הם ב׳ ענייני[ם] המקובלים תחילה בשכל כאמר בן צינא בראשון מאחר הטבע שלו, לכן, כדי שלא נטעה בהם, נאמר מהו הנולד משם מציאות ונמצא ונאמר איך ימצאו אלה שני העניינים הפשוטים והמורכבים וכו׳". סליק די״ן[?] כול״ד[?] ולאע״י[?].

> Hillel a dit : on peut dire que cette dernière [proposition] est comme une explication de celle qui se trouve *supra*, venant expliquer ce que sont ces substances qu'il a dites plus haut ; pourtant elle requiert une explication de l'explication et une attention précise. Quand il dit que l'existant [en soi ; autrement dit : l'essence] et la génération [l'engendré] sont dans un seul temps [cf. § 214 : *est ens et generatio simul*], [c'est] quand ils sont réunis en un seul composé, c'est-à-dire que l'essence vient dans le temps ; tout devenir est essence par quelque côté ; cependant la réciproque n'est pas vraie, car toute essence n'est pas existence (*yešuth*) (dans la marge : c'est-à-dire existence [*meṣi'uth*]) ou devenir, parce que l'essence est séparée et l'existence est subordonnée [= accidentelle], comme lorsqu'on dit le blanc et la blancheur. Et la différence qu'il y a entre l'existant et la génération se trouve dans le texte écrit à ce sujet qu'a écrit un philosophe, intitulé *De l'existence et de l'existant*. J'en ai traduit quelque chose et il débute ainsi : « Parce que, selon le Philosophe au premier livre du *Ciel et du monde*, d'une (*sic*) erreur petite au début, elle s'agrandit et se trouve grande à la fin, et encore parce que nous savons que l'existence et l'existant sont les deux choses reçues d'abord dans l'intelligence, comme l'a dit Avicenne au l. I de sa *Métaphysique*, pour cela, afin qu'on ne se trompe pas à leur sujet, nous exposerons ce qui s'infère (*nolad*) du

> nom d'existence et [de celui] d'existant et nous expliquerons comment se trouvent ces deux entités, simples et composées [avec d'autres]»[112], etc.

Le lien établi avec la proposition précédente est analogue à celui qu'opère Thomas, p. 143, l. 1–p. 144, l. 3, par l'intermédiaire de la prop. 107 de Proclus. Le long développement sur le Premier participé et non participant est parallèle à celui de Thomas, p. 144, l. 28–p. 145, l. 14. La traduction du *De ente et essentia* citée à la fin, d'abord littérale puis éloignée, dont il n'est pas clair si Hillel ne traduit que ce passage pour l'occasion ou veut dire qu'il en a traduit plus long[113], diffère de la traduction complète que Juda de Rome a donnée plus tard[114] de l'opuscule thomiste[115]. Il s'agit de préciser la relation asymétrique de l'existence véritable (absolue) et du devenir (ou existence par participation) : s'il est vrai que toute existence (en devenir dans le temps) tient de l'existant (absolu), il ne l'est pas que ce dernier tienne du devenir.

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112 Thomas d'Aquin, *De ente et essentia*, éd. Baur : *Quia parvus error in principio magnus est in fine, secundum philosophum in 1 Caeli et mundi, ens autem et essentia sunt quae primo intellectu concipiuntur, ut dicit Avicenna in principio suae Metaphysicae, ideo ne ex eorum ignorantia errare contingat, ad horum difficultatem aperiendam dicendum est quid nomine essentiae et entis significetur et quomodo in diversis inveniatur*.

113 Ni l'éd. Sermoneta des *Tagmuley ha-nefeš* ni celle qu'en ont donnée Schwartz-Fidora ne signalent le *De ente et essentia* parmi les textes qu'y cite Hillel de Vérone.

114 Sermoneta 1965, p. 20-21 et n. 41, l'estime né en 1292 (Zunz d'après le témoignage d'Emmanuel de Rome) ou «un peu plus tôt» en raison de l'influence qu'il a reçue des écrits d'Albert le Grand.

115 Éd. Sermoneta 1977 (1995), p. 190, l. 1-7. – Juda Romano n'a donc pas été le premier, comme le pensait Sermoneta d'après son titre, à traduire en hébreu l'ouvrage de Thomas et qu'il ait suivi sur ce point aussi l'essai au moins partiel de Hillel, son devancier déjà dans la traduction du *Liber de causis*, est à prendre en compte dans la compréhension de ses propres intentions. – Steinschneider, dans Halberstamm, éd. cit., f. מאv, n. [2], croyait qu'il s'agissait là des [*Theoremata*] *de esse et essentia* de Gilles de Rome.

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CHAPTER 19

Receptum est in recipiente per modum recipientis: Traces of the *Liber de causis* in Early Kabbalah

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ק״ו בסבת הסבות ועילת העילות שהוא אין סוף ורמזוהו ז״ל באמרם אין שואלין מה למעלה.

SHEM TOV IBN GAON, *Keter Shem Tov*[1]

The study of the reception of the *Liber de causis* in Jewish thought could not be separated, as Jean-Pierre Rothschild aptly put it, "from a more comprehensive enquiry on the diffusion of Neoplatonism in Mediaeval Jewish Thought."[2] Even if I had the required encyclopaedic competence to realize this inquiry, which is unfortunately far from being the case, I would lack the time and space for drawing a sketch of this vast phenomenon. Moreover, following Rothschild's assessment, it would be necessary to take into account possible influences of the Arabic *Liber de causis* for the epochs preceding its translations into Hebrew, alternative, now lost, translations into Hebrew (be it from Arabic or from Latin) and the practically endless field of the "tacit and widespread" presence of the book in Jewish thought. Nevertheless, well aware of the dimensions assigned to the present contribution, I should prefer to focus on a smaller chapter of the reception of the *Liber de causis* in the kabbalistic literature of the origins, with some prospective views on later developments. Rather than delusional completeness, I would like to propose a reflection, on the sound basis of selected case studies, on the significance and the function of the *Liber de causis*, in its various forms, for the beginnings of kabbalistic literature. At the same time,

1 Coriat 1839, f. 26a: "(…) even more so concerning the Cause of causes, that is En Sof, to which the sages of blessed memory alluded, saying that one should not inquire into what is above."

2 Rothschild 2013a, p. 81. On the necessity of a renewed study of the influence of the *Liber de causis* on early Kabbalah see the most recent intervention by Idel 2016, p. 157.

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as it will become clear in the end of my contribution, I will hint to a possible, albeit paradoxical, effect of the Kabbalah upon the *Liber de causis*, examining how this text is transformed by its very adoption by the kabbalists.

The best-known case of reception of a sentence from the *Liber de causis* in kabbalistic literature is without doubt the passage quoted by Abraham Abulafia (second half of the XIII century) in his *Imre shefer*:

> ובכיוצא בזה לא חלקו עלינו בעלי המחקר שהרי אפלטון החכם רבו של ארסטו הפילוסוף הגדול אמר בספר העצמים העליונים דבר בשער אחד וזה לשונו, שהעילה הראשונה יותר עליונות לה מן הספור. ואמנם נלאו הלשונות מלספרה בעבור אחדותה, לפי שהיא למעלה על כל אחדות. ואמנם יסופרו העילות אשר אורו מאור העילה הראשונה. והיא שהעילה הראשונה תאיר עלולה, והיא לא תאור מאור אחר, לפי שהיא האור הגמור המוחלט אשר אין למעלה ממנו אור. ובעבור זה היה האור הראשון מעורר הספור. ואמנם היה זה לפי שאין למעלה ממנו עילה יודע בה. וכל דבר אמנם יוודע מפגישת עילתו. ואם היה הדבר עילה לבד ולא עלול לא יוודע. אם כן, העילה הראשונה לא תסופר, לפי שהיא עליונה יותר מן הספור, ולא יגיענה הדבור. והוא שהספור לא יהיה אלא בדבור, והדבור בשכל, והשכל במחשבה, והמחשבה בדמיון, והדמיון בחושים. והעילה הראשונה למעלה מאלו הדברים כולם, לפי שהיא עילה להם, ומפני זה היתה בלתי נופלת תחת החושים, והדמיון והמחשבה והשכל והדבור. ובעבור זה אינה מסופרת. ונאמר גם כן \ שהדבר אמנם או יהיה מורגש ויפול תחת החושים או יהיה מדומה ויפול תחת הדמיון או יהיה עומד קיים על ענין אחד לא יסור ויהיה מושכל או יהיה סר בלתי נופל תחת ההויה ויהיה נופל תחת המחשב׳ והעילה הראשונה למעלה מהדברים השכליים העומדים ולמעלה מהדברים הבלים. ולזה לא יפול עליה לא החוש ולא הדמיון ולא המחשבה ולא השכל. ואמנם יוקח ראיה עליה מן העילה השנית והוא השכל ואמנם תקרא בשם עלולה הראשונה במין יותר נשא וחשוב כי מה שבארנו וגלינו. עד כאן דברי החכם הנכבד אפלטון.[3]

> In this sort of matter the philosophers (בעלי המחקר) are not in disagreement with us: the wise Plato, teacher of the philosopher Aristotle, in the book of the Highest Substances in a paragraph spoke about the matter, and here are his words:[4] The first cause is above any description (narration). Tongues fail to describe it due to its unity since it is above every unity. What can be told are the causes deriving their splendour from the light of the first cause. This is because the first cause illuminates the effect but it itself is not illuminated by any other light since it is an absolutely perfect light above which there is no light. Therefore, the first light defies description. This is due to the fact that it has no cause through

3 Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia, *Imre shefer*, p. 193–194.

4 Here follows V(VI) of the *Liber de causis*.

> which it may be known. For everything is known and described through its cause. Therefore, if something is a cause only and not an effect, it is not known. If so, the first cause is not described since it is above description and no discourse can reach it, since every description is a discourse, and every discourse derives from intelligence, intelligence in turn derives from thought, thought from imagination and imagination from the senses. The first cause, however, is above all these things, since it is their cause, and for this reason it does not fall under the senses, imagination, thought, intelligence or discourse: therefore, it is beyond description. It is said furthermore that a thing is either sensible and falls under the senses or imaginable, falling under the imagination; either it is stable maintaining the same disposition and it is intelligible, or it is mutable und accidental, falling under the domain of thought, but the first cause is above the intelligible and the transitory, thus it does not fall under the senses, imagination, thought or intelligence. Thus, it can only be the object of an intuition through the second cause, which is intelligence. The latter is called first effect but in a higher and more elevated manner, as we have explained and revealed. These are the words of the venerable sage Plato.

It is interesting to observe, though, that the discovery of this quotation in secondary literature, proceeded backwards, that is to say that the first mentions of this passage which fell under the magnifier of philologists or bibliographers in the XIX century were indirect and much later ones. This path, from the estuary to the source, is not only typical, and understandably so, of philology, but it characterizes already the kabbalistic reception of the *Liber de causis*, in a way that cannot be the mere effect of chance.

The first hint towards an independent tradition of the *Liber de causis*, even before it was recognized as mediated by Abulafia, was detected by Moritz Steinschneider in 1863,[5] in a passage of Joseph Del Medigo's kabbalistic work bearing the title *Sefer Novelot Chokmah*, printed in Basel in 1631.[6] Right from the beginning Steinschneider recognized that the passage quoted by Del Medigo was taken verbatim (with only minor cuts) from Isaac Abravanel's commentary

5 Steinschneider 1863, p. 114, n. 8.

6 Joseph Del Medigo, *Sefer novelot chokmah*, f. 29v: וכן יקראהו אפלטון בס׳ העצמים העליוני׳ וז״ל העלה הראשונה יש לה יותר עליונות מן הספור ואולם נלאו הלשונות מלספרה בעבור אחדותה לפי שהוא למעלה על כל אחדות. ואמנם יסופרו כל העלות אשר אורן מאת העלה הראשונה שהעלה הראשונה תאיר עלולה ההיא לא תואר מאור אחר לפי שהיא האור הגמור והמוחלט אשר אין למעלה ממנה אור. ובשביל זה היה אורה נעדר הספור לפי שאין למעלה ממנה עלה עכ״ל.

on the Pentateuch, and more precisely on the book of Exodus (40,34), written in Venice about 1506 and printed for the first time there, in 1579.[7] At first, however, Steinschneider wondered whether the source of this "Platonic" quotation might derive from a Christian author. Some years later, Steinschneider noticed that Abravanel must have derived his quotation from a contemporary kabbalist, Jochanan Alemanno, who, in his *Sha'ar ha-chesheq*, a large commentary on the Canticle, had quoted the V(VI) of the *Liber de causis* attributing the quotation to a certain "Zacharias", who had cited in his *Imre shefer*, that is to say "beautiful sayings," Plato's treatise "On the Highest Substances" (*ha-'atzamim ha-'elyonim*).[8] Three elements of this bibliographic reference are actually leading astray: Plato is not Plato, Zacharias is not the real name of the author, the book "On the Highest Substances" is not otherwise known by this name, but the book *Imre shefer* does exist.

In 1869 Steinschneider, in his book on al-Fārābī,[9] referred the aforementioned passage from Alemanno, not from the published part of the book *Chesheq Shelomoh*, since it is not comprised in the excerpted edition available in print,[10] but from a manuscript, which had been part of the collection of Isaac Samuel Reggio and had been subsequently purchased by Osias Heschel Schorr in 1847. The latter sold in 1869 many of his manuscripts to the Bodleian Library of Oxford with the help of Steinschneider, who received (in payment?) four manuscripts.[11] One of them, as he states in his catalogue of the Royal Library of Berlin,[12] was in Steinschneider's possession until he sold it to the Königliche Preussische Bibliothek, where it is still preserved.[13] In a footnote of his book on al-Fārābī, Steinschneider copied Alemmano's quotation[14] and

7 Isaac Abravanel, *Perush 'al ha-torah*, f. 224r: ולא לבד נביאי האמת כנו כבודו יתברך בשם אור כי גם חכמי האומות קיימו וקבלו שהוא אור מוחלט וכתב אפלטו"ן בספר העצמי' העליונים וז"ל העלה הראשונה יש לה יותר עליונות מן הספור ואולם נלאו הלשונות מלספרה בעבור אחדותה לפי שהוא למעלה על כל אחדות. ואמנם יסופרו כל העלות אשר אורן מאד העלה הראשונה שהעלה הראשונה תאיר עלולה והיא לא תאיר מאור אחר לפי שהיא האור הגמור והמוחלט אשר אין למעלה ממנה אור. ובעבור זה היה אורה נעדר הספור לפי שאין למעלה ממנה עלה עד כאן. The passage had been noted and translated into Latin by J. Buxtorf jr., *Exercitationes variae*, Basel 1659, p. 121–122.

8 See also Scholem 1928–1929, then in Scholem 1931, p. 58.

9 Steinschneider 1869, p. 114–115.

10 First published in Leghorn 1790 and then in Halberstadt 1862.

11 Cfr. Richler 2012, p. 301–318.

12 Steinschneider 1897, p. 5–6.

13 Sign. Qu. 832, Steinschneider's catalogue n. 143.

14 Steinschneider 1869, p. 114–115, n. 49: כתב אפלטון בספר העצמים העליונים כפי שהביאו זכריה בספר אמרי שפר וז"ל העלה הראשונה יותר עליונות לה מן הספור. ואמנם נלאו הלשונות מלספרה בעבור אחדותה לפי שהיא למעלה **על כל** אחדות. ואמנם יסופרו העלות אשר אורן

described the manuscript as still belonging to the collection of O.H. Schorr.[15] At that point in time, Steinschneider expressed his hope to be able to check the quotation from the alleged author of the *Imre Shefer*, "Secharia," whom he recognized without hesitation as the Spanish Kabbalist Abraham Abulafia, author of a treatise bearing the same name and who used, among many other pseudonyms, also Zekariah, numerical equivalent of his first name.[16] During the same 1869 Steinschneider traveled to Munich in order to, as he believed, put an end to his growing catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts of the Staatsbibliothek (since his catalogue was too voluminous, he had to work many years in order to squeeze it to the desired amplitude: the first edition appeared in 1875,[17] the second twenty years later[18]). And indeed, as he remarked in the Corrections and additions (*Berichtigungen und Zusätze*) at the end of the book on al-Fārābī,[19] he found the quotation in a Munich manuscript, containing the *Imre Shefer* by Abraham Abulafia.[20] Right from the start, Steinschneider had recognized that the passage quoted, which seems to be the source of all the later authors we have mentioned, derives from the *Liber de causis*, bearing, in Abulafia's words, the unusual title of "Book of the Highest Substances." This awakened, in turn, the interest of Otto Bardenhewer, who studied the Hebrew translations of the *Liber de causis* in the end of his edition of the book,[21] and dedicated some attention to Abulafia's quotation.[22]

מאור העלה הראשונה. והיא שהעלה הראשונה תאיר עלולה והיא לא תאור מאור אחר לפי שהיא האור הגמור המוחלט אשר אין למעלה ממנה אור. ובעבור זה היה האור הזה נעדר הספור לפי שאין למעלה ממנו עלה יודע בה. וכל דבר אמנם יודע ויסופר מפגישת עלתו. ואם היה הדבר עלה לבד ולא עלול לא יודע. א״כ העלה הראשונה לא תסופר לפי שהיא עליונה יותר מן הספור ולא יגיענה הדבור והוא שהספור לא יהיה אלא בדבור. והדבור בשכל והשכל במחשבה והמחשבה בדמיון והדמיון בחושים. והעלה הראשונה למעלה מאלו הדברים כלם לפי שהיא עלה להם. ומפני זה היתה בלתי נופלת תחת החושים והדמיון והמחשבה והשכל והדבור. ובעבור זה אינה מסופרת. ונאמר גם כן שהדבר אמנם או יהיה עומד קיים על ענין אחד לא יסור ויהיה מושכל. או יהיה סר נופל תחת ההויה. ויהיה נופל תחת המחשבה. והעלה הראשונה למעלה מהדברים השכליים העומדים ולמעלה מהדברים הכלים. ולזה לא יפול עליה החוש ולא הדמיון ולא המחשבה ולא השכל. ואמנם תקרא בשם עלולה הראשון במין יותר נשא וחשוב. כי מה שהוא לעלול הוא לעלה גם כן אלא שהוא במין נכבד ונשא כמו שבארנו. עכ״ל. I have enhanced in boldtype my own readings, based on the manuscript, where they diverge from Steinschneider's.

15 Steinschneider 1869, ibid.: "Hs. Reggio's (jetzt Schorr's)".

16 In fact the numerical value of the letters forming the name זכריהו, that is 248, coincides with the one resulting from אברהם; cfr. already Landauer 1845, col. 510.

17 Steinschneider 1875.

18 Steinschneider 1895.

19 Steinschneider 1869, p. 249.

20 In the MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 285, f. 114r–v.

21 Cfr. Bardenhewer 1882, p. 305–323.

22 Bardenhewer 1882, p. 319–320.

Among the five known Hebrew versions of the *Liber de causis*, conscientiously studied by Jean-Pierre Rothschild, none could be said to be the source of Abulafia. It is evident that Abulafia depended from the Latin tradition of the work: in fact, he speaks of 32 propositions, a subdivision of the text material which is not found in the Arabic mediated "original" of the *Liber de causis* and therefore he could not depend from the Hebrew translation (made approximately in the 80s of the 13th century) by Zerachia Chen.[23] The shorter version contained in the ms. 706 of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, independently from any question of dating, could not be Abulafia's source since it only translates the propositions and not the commentary, which forms part of Abulafia's quotation. The two later Hebrew translations (made, respectively, by Judah Romano and Eli Chabillo), are out of the question since they have been completed after Abulafia's death. Only one Hebrew translation, attributed in all likeliness to Hillel of Verona's, could be Abulafia's source. There are two facts which are of peculiar interest in this context: Abulafia reports that he has been a pupil of Hillel, in Capua, about 1260 and Hillel is the only one who attributes the propositions to Plato, as Abulafia does, although he suggests that Plato was the author of the propositions and "Abunasr" that is to say al-Fārābī, was the author of the commentary. Nevertheless, a quick comparison of the two translations shows that, against Bardenhewer's hypothesis, Abulafia did not use, if he ever knew it, Hillel's version.[24] In other words, the most important fragment of the *Liber de causis* in kabbalistic literature, used many times over to justify the central doctrine of the sefirot and the negative theology of the first kabbalists down to the XVII century is independent from the philosophical reception of the same booklet. This does not mean that, in order to explain the vast reception of the *Liber de causis* within Jewish thought, its adoption in kabbalistic circles did not play a substantial role: quite the contrary

23 See *Pseudo-Aristoteles Liber de causis* (ed. Schreiber).

24 Hillel's version is attested in only one manuscript preserved at the Bodleian Library of Oxford, sign. Mich. 335 (olim 82), cfr. Neubauer 1886, col. 465–466, n. 1318. The text is published in Rothschild 2013b. To ease the comparison, I quote here the relevant passage, according to Rothschild's edition (p. 306): העילה הראשונה היא על כל סיפור והלשונות לא יוכלו לספרה בעבור שהיא על כל עילה. אמר המפרש הסבה בזה היא בעבור שכל סיפור היא מונחה [?] בצד סיבה ועם היות שסיבה הראשונה אין לה עילה א״כ אי איפשר שתסופר וזה בעבור שהסיפור יעשה בעד דברור והדבור יעשה בעד שכל והשכל בעד נחשבה והמחשבה בעד חוש והסבה הראשונה היא על כל אלה בעבור שהיא סבה לכולם ואינה נופלת תחת חוש ולא תחת מחשבה א״כ מן הנמנע שהיא תסופר ועוד נאמר מוסף על מה שאמרנו או הדבר יהיה מוחש או יהיה מחושב או יהיה עומד קבוע לפי תכונה אחת והוא מושכל או יהיה נשחת ונופל תחת הויה והפסד והסבה הראשונה היא על כל אלה כשהיא נצחית והיא ממעל לכל הנשחתים א״כ לא יפול בה לא חוש ולא מחשבה.

is the case, as it is shown, among other things, by the extant manuscripts of the Hebrew translations of the booklet, in which one of its versions is copied within kabbalistic miscellanies, and by the fact that at least for Hillel of Verona the contraposition between philosophy and Kabbalah was not a relevant one.[25] As J.-P. Rothschild has recommended, it would certainly be worthwhile to investigate in which measure Kabbalah influenced the direct and indirect reception of the *Liber de causis* in Jewish thought, but I would prefer, on this occasion, to follow a different path which, if I am not mistaken, should nevertheless contribute to understand the ways of the *Liber de causis* within Jewish medieval literature. What I suggest to investigate is the function of explicit or implicit reference to the *Liber de causis*, be it understood as the work of Plato, of Aristotle, of Proclus or of al-Fārābī, within the emerging literature of Kabbalah.

Nevertheless, before studying one case in point, represented by an implicit quotation of the *Liber de causis* in a short kabbalistic treatise of 'Azri'el of Gerona, it seems appropriate to focus briefly on two important features of the text[26] we have followed backwards to the "source" which is not older than the first Hebrew translations of the book, but certainly independent from them. The first point is of rather philological nature, and concerns the fact that Jochanan Alemanno demonstrably knew from other sources the *Liber de causis*, which he quotes repeatedly in his unpublished works and notebooks,[27] and was even aware that this metaphysical treatise represented the thought of the Neoplatonic philosopher Proclus.[28] This did not prevent him, out of respect for his source, Abulafia, to maintain the attribution to Plato in more than one circumstance. The second point deserving to be underlined is that the function of this relatively short quotation varies from author to author and, less surprisingly, from an epoch to the next. The most interesting "context" is undoubtedly the original one, offered by Abraham Abulafia. Immediately after the passage from the *Liber de causis* quoted above, and copied so many times afterwards, he writes:

25 Cfr. Hillel von Verona, *Über die Vollendung der Seele*.

26 *Liber de causis*, V(VI).

27 Cfr. Idel 1982, p. 60–112; Idel 1983, p. 186–242. The same passage from the *Liber de causis* is quoted, with only minor textual variations, in Alemanno's *Collectanea*: Paris, BnF, hébr. 849, f. 91r (here, instead of Plato, the author of the passage is identified as "one of the sons of Yaphet", that is to say, a Greek) and f. 123r; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Neubauer n. 2234 (old sign. Reggio 23), f. 21r. See also Ogren 2016, p. 31.

28 See for example, Alemanno's work *Chay ha-ʿolamim*, ms. Mantua, Biblioteca Comunale, 21, f. 22v, where אפורוקלוס (Proclus) is explicitly quoted.

> וכתבתי לך כל מה שכללו בשער אחד שלם מעניינים אלה, להודיעך דעת הפילוסופים בשם ית׳. ואיך העמיקו לחקור ענייני הבורא ית׳ בכל יכלתם, כפי חכמתם. ויחדוהו יתעל׳, תכלית היחוד, כפי סכל שכלם. והוא חבר בשכלים, ובעניינים אלו, ספרים רבים, והיה זה הנזכר אחד מהם, וכלל בו ל״ב שערים מעולים מאד, כלם מלאים חכמות מופלאות, והם ראוים לכל מקובל לדעתם[29].

> I have copied the entire contents of the paragraph concerning this subject in order to let you know what the philosophers think about the Lord, blessed be He, how deep they researched about the Creator, may He be exalted, with all their might, according to their wisdom, and how they proclaimed His perfect unity, according to the reach of their intellect. The author [Plato] wrote many books concerning the intellects and related subjects, and the one we have just quoted is among them: in it he gathered 32 truly excellent paragraphs, all of them containing wonderful treasures of wisdom, so that they are worth knowing for every kabbalist.

Abulafia states here openly that what "Plato" and the philosophers have to say about the ineffable "First Cause" is worth considering, since it confirms the doctrines of Kabbalah. In a different historical and cultural context, at the end of the XV century, Jochanan Alemanno bends the very same words quoted by Abulafia, as the proof that the *sefirot* (interpreted here as "narrations") one of the central tenets of Kabbalah, are to be considered in perfect accordance with "Plato," since he stated that the First Cause only is unspeakable (above any "narration"), implying that immediately after the First, the secondary causes, or the intelligences, or rather the Platonic Ideas, are to be closely identified with the sefirot. Abravanel, as Alemanno before him, pointed out the perfect compatibility with the doctrine of "Plato" with the teachings of Al-Ghazālī, against the doctrine of Averroes, but Abravanel underlines also that the very same doctrines are found in the *Pardes rimmonim* of Moses Cordovero, a classic of XVI century Kabbalah. In the XVII century Abraham Yagel, in his *Bet Ya'ar ha-Levanon*, quotes the very same text pointing out that its negative theology coincides largely with the kabbalistic doctrine and linking it also to Hermetic doctrines.[30] The largest apologetical syncretism is undoubtedly to be found in Joseph Del Medigo, who recognized easily that the "Platonic" doctrine of the *Liber de causis* was in perfect harmony with Proclus, Plotinus, Al-Ghazālī, the kabbalists, but also, in describing the *Ein sof* as pure light, in accordance with

29 Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia, *Imre shefer*, p. 195.

30 Cfr. Idel 1983, p. 240, n. 206. See also Ruderman 1988, p. 130.

the Bible, the Jewish exegetes (he names Rambam, Ibn Ezra and Ramban) and the most divine among the Christian sages. This universal concordance seems to go too far, but it defines perfectly, although through an exaggeration, the whole point of my present argument: the reception of the *Liber de causis* in this context, undoubtedly of kabbalistic origin, is always functional to some project of harmonistic, more than syncretistic nature. One cannot overlook the fact that the *Liber de causis*, as elsewhere the *Theologia Aristotelis*, serve the general purpose of reinforcing the legitimacy of kabbalistic innovations *ad intra*, and, *ad extra*, of integrating the authentic core of Jewish revelation in the language (be it cataphatic or, such as in this case, apophatic) of the other.[31]

1 A Renaissance Intermezzo

Before going back to early Kabbalah, a short intermission seems desirable at this point, in order to follow a trace of the *Liber de causis*, which becomes identified with Kabbalah in a thinker who was rather afraid of the confusion between Jewish tradition and Platonism, but had no major objection to articulate his thought in rigorous Aristotelic-Averroistic terms. I am referring to Elijah Del Medigo, who in 1486, commenting upon Averroes' *De substantia orbis* adds, as Idel already pointed out,[32] a passage in which an allusion to the *Liber de causis* is very likely:

> כי הם יאמינו שהאין סוף לא יפול בו שום מחשבה וציור ולא גבול ואפי׳ שכלי ואין לומ׳ בו לא רצון ולא כונה ולא מחשבה ובכלל שום תאר. וא״א שיהיה הדבר המגיע מאתו ראשונה העולם הזה כי יחסר מזה שלמותו. אבל הנאצל מאתו[33] ראשונה הם אלה הנמצאים אשר יקראום ספירו׳ כפי מדרגתם והם פעלי׳ בכח העשירי אשר יקראוהו הם אין סוף ובשפע המגיע להם ממנו. ולכן הכל בכחו כי הם נתלים בו ונאצלים \ ממנו. וא״כ לפי דברי׳ אלה הסדור הזה אשר לעולם הם הספירו׳ או מאתם יגיע. ואלה העניינים לקוחי׳ מדברי קדומי הפילוסו׳ ובפרט האפלטוניין תמצא בספריהם אלה הדברי׳ באריכו׳ ויבנו ראיות על אלה כפי דרכם. והם אמרו שאין לומ׳ על האין סוף אפי׳ שם השכל כאשר זכר ב״ר בשמם בהפלת ההפלה וכאשר ידוע לאשר ראה ספרי אלה

31 For a further interesting chapter of the history of the reception of prop. v(vi) of the *Liber de causis* in Kabbalistic literature, see Scholem 1964, p. 46; then in Scholem 1970a, p. 50 quoting Vajda 1954, p. 64.

32 Idel 1983, p. 219.

33 The word ממנו is effaced here.

האפלטוניין ודברי קדומי הפילו׳ תמצא ג״כ בם השמיטו׳ וחורבן העולם ובנינו וגלגול הנשמו׳ ובכלל כמעט לא תמצא הבדל בין אלה ובין המקובלי׳ אלו בשמו׳ וברמיזו׳[34]

> For they believe that thought and mental conception do not properly apply to *En sof*, neither does any definition, not even the one of intellect. Concerning it, neither volition, intention, thought nor, in general, may any attribute be said. Furthermore, it is impossible that this world be, at the outset, that which derives from it, since its perfection would thereby be rendered deficient. Instead, what emanates from it at the outset are those Existents which they term sefirot in accordance with their rank. These act by virtue of the force of the tenth one which they call En sof and by virtue of the emanating flux deriving from it. Consequently, everything exists by virtue of its force, since they all are contingent upon it and are emanated from it. Hence, according to their statements, the order of this world is either constituted by the sefirot or is derived from them. These notions are taken from the statements of the ancient philosophers, especially the Platonists. In their books, you will find these statements being expatiated. They construct proofs upon their basis, in accordance with their fashion. They asserted that one may not apply even the epithet of intellect to the *En sof*, as Averroes mentioned in their name in the *Incoherence of the Incoherence*[35] and as it is known to whoever has seen the books of these Platonists, as well as the statements of the ancient philosophers. You will also find in them the doctrines of cosmic aeons—the destruction of the world and its restoration—as well as the doctrine of metempsychosis. And in general, you will find almost no difference between them and the kabbalists except for the divine epithets and cryptic allusions.[36]

Del Medigo, who was no fan of the Kabbalah and certainly no Platonist, accuses the Kabbalists of having derived their idea of *En sof* and of the emanation of the sefirot from Plato and the ancient philosophers. Elijah del Medigo translated his commentary on the *De substantia orbis* also in Latin[37] but the passage

34 Ms. Paris, BnF hébr. 968, f. 41r–v. The passage had been partly quoted in Idel 1982, p. 99, but the text contains several mistakes, which affect, as a consequence, also M. Gavarin's translation (in Idel 1983, p. 219). For a superior version, see Bland 1991, p. 52.

35 Cfr. Averroes, *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, p. 186.

36 I quote here the translation of Bland 1991, p. 31–32.

37 His Latin version of the commentary is preserved in the ms. Vat. Lat. 4553 of the Vatican Library.

quoted above is not yet present there.[38] In any event, upon Pico's insistence on having Elia's opinion on Kabbalah, he translated the passage in the famous letter written between 1485 and 1486[39] to his patron preserved in the ms. 6508 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. There (f. 75r–v), the missing passage is found:

> Ipsi enim opinantur, quod sunt hic quedam entia, quorum gradus est inferior gradu dei gloriosi, quem vocant infinitum, que sunt fluxa, non dico facta neque producta, ab illo, quod vocant infinitum, et ipsa habent gradus diversos, et gradus horum superior est motoribus celorum, et corporibus celestibus sensibilibus. Et ordo, per quem producuntur entia producta et conservantur secundum ordinem, est per ista, scilicet çephiroth, idest numerationes, / sic enim vocant illa fluxa ab infinito. Ipsi namque credunt, quod in infinito nulla cadit cogitatio, neque aprehensio, neque terminus sive determinatio aliqua, vel dispositio etiam intellectualis, neque dicitur de ipso voluntas, neque intentio, neque cogitatio, et universaliter nulla dispositio, et impossibile est, ut sit res proveniens, seu fluxa ab ipso, scilicet infinito.[40] Iste mundus nam esset diminutus secundum hoc, seu deficeret ab eo perfectio sua, sed primum fluxum ab ipso sunt ista entia, que diximus, secundum gradus eorum, que vocant çephiroth, ut diximus, et ipsa sunt agentia per virtutem dei, quem ipsi vocant infinitum, et per fluxum, qui provenit eis ab ipso, et ideo omnia sunt per virtutem illius. Nam ipsa, scilicet çephiroth,[41] dependent ab ipso, et fluxa sunt ab ipso, scilicet infinito. Unde, secundum hos, ordo iste inventus in mundum est per illa çephiroth. Primum autem simpliciter quem vocant infinitum nulla dispositio, seu attributio positiva, dicitur de eo, ymmo neque ipsum volunt vocare intellectum, ut dicit etiam Averrois in libro Destructio destructionum, loquendo de attributis, seu proprietatibus, quod Plato seu quidam Platonici nolunt[42] vocare deum intellectum, seu affirmare de ipso, quod est intellectus. Ipsis autem çephiroth posuerunt nomina propria, et motum fluxus seu dependentie, et deder-

38 I wish to express my gratitude to Giovanni Licata, who is preparing a critical edition of Del Medigo's Commentary on the *De substantia orbis*, for checking the Latin manuscript.

39 On the date of this latter and the complex problem of which of the two versions of the Commentary on the *De substantia orbis* has been composed first, see Busi 2006, p. 167–196; Italian translation in Busi 2007, p. 25–45.

40 The words *scilicet infinito* are added on the margin.

41 The words *scilicet çephiroth* are added on the margin.

42 Here the word *dicere* is erased.

> unt secundum opinionem eorum causam, quare ista debent esse [X[43]], neque plura, neque pauciora, et in his fecerunt libros et volumina.[44]

From the vantage point of an adversary of Kabbalah, as Elia del Medigo most probably was,[45] it is easy to see the danger implicit in utilizing such material as the "Platonic" *Liber de causis*: it could lead to the venomous accusation of depending from "foreign wisdom", thus contaminating the purity of Biblical revelation. This explains perhaps the prudence with which the kabbalists, for enthusiastic they might be concerning the analogies of their doctrines with the Platonic ones, in endorsing explicitly the teachings of Arabic or, even worse, Pagan Neoplatonism.[46] It might be perhaps more than a curiosity to add that a Kabbalist with Platonic sympathies, one of the teachers of Giles of Viterbo,[47] a famous Jewish convert, Felix Pratensis (Felice da Prato), obtained from the authorities in Venice in 1515 the permission of printing two Latin translations of kabbalistical works: the already mentioned *Imre shefer* of Abraham Abulafia and the *Sefer ha-temunah*, where the doctrine of the *shemittot* (world cycles) and of the periodical *apocatastasis* is overtly taught, exactly the doctrinal tenets against which Del Medigo was battling.

It is perhaps interesting to note that Pico himself commented upon the *Liber de causis* in his 900 theses, attributing them, uniquely, to the Arab "Abucaten Avenan", identified by Mauro Zonta as the Christian translator of the *Theologia Aristotelis* into Arabic, Abu-Katm ibn-Na'ima al-Ḥimṣi,[48] and in one of his theses, he expanded precisely about the proposition on the ineffability of the first Cause.[49] But Pico was certainly aware that Plato (or Aristotle) was not the

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43 A blank space is left in place of the expected number of the sefirot.

44 A first partial edition of the letter has been published by Dukas 1876; see also Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *De dignitate hominis*, p. 67–72; the letter has been edited integrally by Kieszkowski 1964, p. 63–75. As it is well known, Kieszkowski's edition is not completely reliable, I have therefore based the excerpt quoted above on a direct reading of the manuscript, underlining the words which differ from his edition. See now Licata 2017, p. 122.

45 Pace Bland.

46 Cfr. Idel 1992.

47 Cfr. Kahle 1954, p. 50–74. See also Stern 2011, p. 76–108.

48 Zonta 1998, p. 323–330.

49 In the fifth thesis according to the *Liber de causis*, he writes: *Cum dicit Abucaten causam primam superiorem esse omni narratione, non tam propter id habet veritatem quod primo affert, quia scilicet causam ante se non habet, quam propter id quod secundario innuit, quia omne intelligibile unialiter antecedit*. I quote here the translation by Farmer 1998, p. 463: "When Abucaten said that the first cause is superior to all speech, this is not true so much because of what he affirms first, namely since it has no cause before itself, but because of what he suggests second, because it is unially antecedent to everything intelligible".

author of the *Liber de causis*. Moreover, as I have pointed out elsewhere,[50] also his translator, the Jewish convert Flavius Mithridates, responsible for the Latin version of a large kabbalistic library, seems to recur to the language of the *Liber de causis* for interpreting kabbalistic language, for instance in rendering the Hebrew תשובה, one of the names of the last *sefirah* (*Malkut*) not, as usual, with *conversio*, but with the Latin *reiteratio*, an expression, and a concept behind it, which is tightly related to § 14 (15) of the *Liber de causis*.[51] This kind of implicit quotation, however, is highly problematic since Mitrhidates, defined once a *legitimus Platonis amicus* by Ficino,[52] was versed in Neoplatonic philosophy. The contamination of sources makes often the quest for authentic traces of the *Liber de causis* in Humanistic philosophy, no less than in Christian Kabbalah a desperate enterprise. As it will become clear in the next chapter, reading Medieval metaphysics with Renaissance glasses is a constant temptation, sometimes even a necessity, but it implies quite remarkable philological costs.

2 Back to the Beginning

Ironically, there seems to be few ways of reading Medieval kabbalistic texts without recurring to their Humanistic reception. Among Mithridates' translations for Giovanni Pico della Mirandola one finds[53] a treatise bearing the Latin title *Questiones super decem sefirot cum responsionibus suis*, which is the interpretation of one of the titles with which this fortunate booklet is known in Hebrew manuscripts שאלות ותשובות על עשר ספירות (*Sheelot u-teshuvot ʿal ʿeser sefirot*) by the Geronese Kabbalist 'Azri'el of Gerona (1160–1238), who wrote his foundational commentaries and tracts before the first (known) Hebrew translation of the *Liber de causis* was accomplished. In this "catechism," an imaginary dialogue is depicted between a Kabbalist and a "questioner," someone who is in search of truth, a philosopher in the most basic sense. The questions and the answers proceed from the existence of God to the explanation of the single *sefirot*, having recourse not primarily to the authority of the Bible or to some secret revelation, but to allegedly stringent rational arguments. The first two

50 Cfr. Campanini 2005, p. 76; see also Menahem Recanati, *Commentary on the Daily Prayers*, p. 123–124.

51 *Liber de causis*, XIV(XV): *Omnis sciens qui scit essentiam suam est rediens ad essentiam suam reditione completa*.

52 Cfr. Kristeller 1937, p. 35.

53 In the ms. Vat. Ebr. 190 of the Vatican Library, f. 165r–173v; cfr. Campanini 2002, p. 90–96 and Campanini 2020.

of these questions, before delving into the technicalities of kabbalistic lore, contain very general statements on the nature of God, and repeatedly 'Azri'el quotes the חכמי המחקר (*chakme ha-mechqar*), the "Philosophers"[54] or the wise inquirers, as opposed to the חכמינו ז״ל, "our sages of blessed memory," referring to the rabbinic tradition. What is attributed to the "philosophers" comes invariably to confirm the kabbalistic doctrine presented by 'Azri'el. For example, in the answer to the first question, concerning the existence of God, we read:

> ומה שהוא נעלם אין קץ ותכלית ואין לו חקר ואין חוץ ממנו. וחכמי המחקר מודים בזה הדבר שאין סוף ואין חקר ואין גבול לעילת כל העילות וסבת הסבות[55].

> [That which is hidden is without end and limit; it is unfathomable and nothing exists outside it. The philosophers admit to this fact that the Cause of all causes and the Origin of origins is infinite, unfathomable, and without limit.[56]]

It seems apt to quote, here and in the following instances, Flavius Mithridates' translation as well:

> … quod autem ocultatur neque habet finem neque terminum neque consumationem neque investigationem, nec est extra se. Sapientes autem inquisitores concedunt hoc scilicet in re non habente finem nec terminum nec investigationem et vocant eum causam causarum seu adinventionem adinventionum.[57]

Again, in the answer to the second question, a statement concerning negative theology is attributed to the 'philosophers':

> וחכמי המחקר מודים לדברי האומר כי אין השגתינו כי אם על דרך לא[58]

> [Furthermore, the philosophers are in agreement that our perception of Him cannot be except by way of negative attribution.[59]]

54 According to the translation of Ronald C. Kiener, in Dan 1986, p. 89–96.
55 'Azri'el of Gerona, *Perush 'eser sefirot*, in Ibn Gabbay 1850, f. 2r.
56 Dan 1986, p. 89.
57 MS Vat. Ebr. 190, f. 165r.
58 'Azri'el, *Perush*, f. 2r.
59 Dan 1986, p. 90.

> Et sapientes inquisitores concedunt verba dicentis quod non est comprehensio nostra nisi per viam non.[60]

A third instance, found in the answer to the seventh question, is less specific, but still deserves some consideration:

> וחכמי המחקר אמרו כי שכל האדם יש לו גבול ומדרך המנה[י]ג אנו רואים כי כל דבר יש לו גבול ושעור ומדה[61].

> [Finally, the philosophers stated that man's intellect is finite, and that from the way of the Ruler we see that everything has limitation, magnitude, and measure.[62]]
>
> Sapientes autem inquisitores dixerunt quod intellectus hominis habet terminum, de more autem consuetudinis est dicere quod videmus quod omnis[63] res habet terminum quantitatem discretam et mensuram.[64]

One could point to several analogies with the style of thought of the *Liber de causis*, but, admittedly, these are too generic elements for building on their basis a philological argument in order to state without doubts that 'Azri'el read approvingly the *Liber de causis*, or, for that matter, that he was indirectly influenced by that booklet. That a certain familiar similarity is recognizable between the *Liber de causis* and these texts is rather undeniable, but it is quite a modest result. More interesting for our purpose is the carefully chosen terminology of our kabbalist, who, in two out of three references to the "wise men" or "the philosophers" uses the verb מודים (*modim*), that is "they admit," or "confess," a rather polemical, or rhetorically astute, lexical choice, in order to prevent any possible confessional or theological objection, both from the interlocutor, who seems to be rather inclined to dialectical argumentation than to *ex auctoritate* tirades and, even more, from the readers.

The peculiar character of these passages is quite different from, to name only one example, a well-known explicit quotation of the *Liber de causis* (called in this instance *Sefer ha-'illot*), attributed to Aristotle, and inserted in a pseudo-

60 MS Vat. Ebr. 190, f. 165v.
61 'Azri'el, *Perush*, f. 3r.
62 Dan 1986, p. 93.
63 The word *omnis* is written twice in the ms.
64 MS Vat. Ebr. 190, f. 167v.

epigraphic text, the notorious *Kevod ha-Shem* attributed to El ʿazar ha-Qallir and cited in his *Commentary to the Sefer yetzirah* by Moshe Botarel, who wrote for a Christian patron at the end of the 14th century.[65] The supposed author of the fictitious *Kevod ha-Shem*, Ha-Qallir, who lived in the 6th–7th century, should have quoted, according to Botarel, with absolute exactitude, the proposition 21 (20) of the *Liber de causis*:

> והוא ית׳ לא יצטרך אל דבר ולכן אמר אריסט״ו בספר העילות בהקדמת עשרים ואחת, הראשון עשיר בעצמו בתכלית כל שמציאותו מציאות גמור בתכלית השלימות משולל ומסולק מכל חסרון. ולכן אמר עשיר בעצמו עכ״ל הרב רבי אליעזר הקליר[66].

> [The Lord], blessed be He, does not need anything. Therefore, Aristotle in the *Book of Causes*, in the proposition 21, says: "The first is rich in himself" absolutely, since his reality is perfect at the extreme degree of completeness, devoid and deprived of any need. Therefore [Aristotle] says "rich in himself." End of the quotation from R. Elʿazar ha-Qallir.

It seems that Botarel, who used to legitimize his own ideas attributing them pseudo-epigraphically to prestigious authors of the past, utilized the same technique also in order to quote his "Aristotelic" source, preventing thus any possible criticism for utilizing external sources and, at the same time, in writing for his Christian patron, "master John", he could point to a common source.[67]

Be it as it may, as Gershom Scholem has noted,[68] a more subtle influence of the *Liber de causis* can be detected in another short treatise by ʿAzri'el of Gerona, bearing the title *Derek ha-emunah we-derek ha-kefirah* (*The way of Faith and of Disbelief*), published by Scholem himself,[69] after he had discovered it in 1938 in a manuscript[70] at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

The radical thought of ʿAzri'el, imbibed with Neoplatonism, has fascinated many scholars since Scholem's publication but, as we will see, even before him. A systematic study of the influence of the *Liber de causis* and of Neoplatonic thought on this treatise is still to be done, but here I will limit myself to a quite

65 Cfr. Bardenhewer 1882, p. 321. Concerning the *status quaestionis* of Moshe Botarel's falsifications, cfr. Campanini 2012a.

66 Cfr. *Sefer yetzirah* (ed. Mantua 1562), f. 82r.

67 Provided that his Christian patron, as Botarel himself, was not aware of the fact that already Thomas Aquinas refuted Aristotle's authorship of the *Liber de causis*.

68 Scholem 1948, p. 140.

69 Scholem 1942, p. 207–213.

70 Bearing the signature JTS Mic. 1889 (Halberstam 444).

short passage, already object of the attention of Scholem,[71] Daniel Matt,[72] Elliott Wolfson,[73] Karl Grözinger,[74] Sandra Valabrègue,[75] to name only a few.[76]

Right at the beginning of his short treatise the Catalan kabbalist explains why the opposite ways of faith and disbelief have a common root: the believer believes in God and the denier denies God, thus in God there is the root of faith and of disbelief, since he is both "being" and "naught." In his words:

> אם ישאלך היאך הוציא יש מאין והלא יש הפרש גדול בין יש לאין. השיבהו בכר אמרתי לך כי המוציא יש מאין אינו חסר וכי היש הוא באין בענין אין והאין הוא היש בענין יש, ועל זה אמרו עשה אינו ישנו ולא אמרו עשה יש מאין כדי ללמוד שהאין הוא היש והיש הוא האין[77].

> And if [the questioner] asks you: How could He draw being from nought? Is it not a great distance between the two? Answer him: I have already told you that the One who drew Being from nought does not lack anything and that Being is in Nought, according to the modality of Nought, and Nought is Being, according to the modality of Being. Concerning this it has been said: "He made his Being out of his Nought"[78] and it was not said "He made Being ex Nihilo," in order to let you know that nought is Being and Being is Nought.

The point of interest, among many, in our context is the observation made by Scholem that the expression "Being is in Nought according to the modality of Nought, and Nought is Being according to the modality of Being" reminds strongly of the proposition 11 of the *Liber de causis*.[79] Scholem deems that 'Azri'el must have had at his disposal a Hebrew translation of the *Liber de causis*, but the usage he made of it is quite different from the one he made of gen-

71 See Scholem 1956, p. 109; then in Scholem 1970, p. 78; moreover, see Scholem 1962, p. 375; English translation Scholem 1987, p. 423.

72 Matt 1990, subsequently in Fine 1995, p. 67–109.

73 Wolfson 1994.

74 Grözinger 2005, p. 243–302; see also Grötzinger 1986.

75 Valabrègue 2010.

76 One could also point to Ciucu 2010 as a good example of a research in which not the direct influence is sought, but rather the striking affinity between two ways of thinking the abysmal nature of "Nought". For the most recent edition of 'Azri'el's works, see Porat 2019.

77 Scholem 1942, p. 207.

78 *Sefer yetzirah* 2,4.

79 In Judah Romano's translation: אם כן העלול הוא בעלה בדרך העלה והעלה בעלול בדרך עלול (Rothschild 2013b, p. 321).

eric Neoplatonic *theologoumena*, since in this case he reworks the language of his source, i.e. the terminology of the *Liber de causis*, in his own metaphysical reflection.

It seems appropriate at this point to ask: can the formulation used by 'Azri'el, strongly reminding the reader of the *Liber de causis*, be considered a full-blown quotation? Certainly not, but one could add, how would 'Azri'el quote the *Liber de causis*? Probably, as it was his custom, by introducing it with the expression חכמי המחקר, which constitutes in his parlance a perfect synonym for "Plato", as the following example demonstrates. In a short commentary on the prayer of the Kaddish[80] the following sentence, once again a re-writing of key principles of the *Liber de causis*, is attributed to the חכמי המחקר:

> בני הוה יודע שעל כגון זה אמרו חכמי המחקר יורד משרש השרשים עד צורת הצורות צריך ללכת ברבוי והעולה מצורת הצורות עד שורש השרשים צריך ללקוט הרבוי שהחלק העליון מהם מיחדם שהשרש בכל צורה שממנו בכל זמן ובהשחת הצורות לא ישחית השורש.
>
> My son, you should know that the philosophers[81] have said: the one who descends from the Root of the roots to the Form of forms needs to proceed by multiplying whereas the one who ascends from the Form of forms to the Root of roots needs to gather plurality [into unity], since their superior portion unites them. The root, in fact, is in every form deriving from it at any time and if you suppress the forms you do not suppress the root.

These same words appear also in 'Azri'el's commentary on the *Aggadot*, published, partly, by Scholem in 1930[82] and more completely by Tishby.[83] What is remarkable in this instance is the fact that the same quotation is now attributed "Plato". 'Azri'el even adds, after a quotation from Plato and one from Aristotle,[84] the following statement:

> ודברי חכמת התורה ודברי בעלי המחקר הנזכרים שניהם כאחד, דרך אחד להם ואין הפרש ביניהם אלא שינוי שמות בלבד, שהחקרים לא ידעו לתת שם הראוי לכל חלק

80 Published first by Scholem 1942, p. 214–216. French translation in the appendix of Séd-Rajna 1974, p. 142–145.

81 Or 'wise inquirers'.

82 Scholem 1930, p. 4.

83 'Azri'el, *Perush ha-aggadot*, ed. 1945, p. 82–83; new ed. 1983, p. 144–145.

84 Actually, the quotation, well known in Jewish medieval literature, is from the so-called *Theology of Aristotle*, see Vajda 1956, p. 138–142.

וחלק וחכמי האמת המקובלים מן הנביאים שקבלו מפי הנביאים שקבלו מפי הגבורה יודעים לחלק חלקי הדברים ולקרות כל דבר ודבר בשם הראוי לו לפי כחו ופעלתו.[85]

> The words of the Wisdom of the Law and the words of the philosophers I have recalled converge, they follow the same path and there is no difference between them except for terminology only since the philosophers do not know how to name the single parts, whereas the wise men of truth who received (*ha-mequbbalim*) [their wisdom] from the prophets, who received [their inspiration] from the Almighty are knowledgeable about every single component of reality and can name exactly everything according to its virtue and its action.

The difference between philosophers and kabbalists is in the names, albeit not a nominalistic one: they differ rather in the very essence, which is, for Judaism, an ineffable Name. In this difference one should perhaps search for traces of the *Liber de causis* in early kabbalistic literature, without forgetting that the short treatises of 'Azri'el do not form the core of kabbalistic literature "per se". They are a prominent example of a quite different literary genre, very much inspired by philosophical style, that is kabbalistic apologetics. Within its boundaries, and only there, as it has been shown, an explicit or even implicit reference to the breviary of Neoplatonism in the Middle Ages makes sense. In other words: allusions or quotations of the *Liber de causis* are easily retrievable whenever the kabbalists recur to the apologetic mode, but in the core of their literary production these traces are virtually absent or they are not clearly recognizable.

It is not by mere chance, thus, that the subsequent approaches to Kabbalah from an external point of view were particularly interested in Neoplatonic analogies, and found a special interest precisely in passages where the kabbalists did paraphrase the *Liber de causis*. A particularly relevant case in point is of course the German humanist Johannes Reuchlin, who in his *De arte cabalistica* (1517), copied the aforementioned passage of 'Azri'el about Being and Nought, enhancing that he was strikingly reminded of the *De docta ignorantia* of Cusanus, which for him meant the most enthusiastic approval.[86] The discovery of the same in the other, the pleasant effect of finding out that the kabbalist had read the same books as his own intellectual references is a beautiful demonstration of the potential and of the limits of any cultural encounter. As it is known, Scholem was thinking of Reuchlin when he found in New York the kabbalistic

85 Scholem 1930, p. 4–5; 'Azri'el, *Perush ha-aggadot*, ed. 1945, p. 83; new ed. 1983, p. 145.
86 I have expanded on this subject in Campanini 2012b.

source he was quoting, to his philological satisfaction.[87] The *Liber de causis* represents, in this exemplary case, the connecting source (the root) explaining analogies between heterogeneous textual traditions. On the other hand, its pervasive character runs the risk of impoverishing the significance of its very presence.

Philosophy and philology follow two diametrically opposed vectors: philology, especially in the case of the *Liber de causis* is in search of an archetype (be it Proclus, Plotinus or even Plato himself, but nothing forbids to tend to even higher points in time), whereas history of philosophy, commenting a commentary, proceeds towards the latest manifestation of an idea, the function and understanding of a concept. Reading the *Liber de causis* in medieval Jewish mysticism, or rather in its apologetical dimension, seems possible only through the prism of the Renaissance.

To study the reception of a Pagan work within a religious current such as Kabbalah implies two different aspects: an apologetic bent, which provides the suitable context for any explicit reference to the *Liber de causis*, otherwise disguised to the point of being unrecognizable, and a philosophical-philological endeavour. The latter, as I have tried to show, bears in itself the seed of contradiction, as Kabbalah as a religious doctrine implies in itself. Kabbalah is taken to mean "reception" and the kabbalists purport to unearth the authentic meaning of tradition but, fatally, as the newest commentary, ontologically belated, as it were. Philology attempts, at times with remarkable success, to reconstruct the "original" source of the *Liber de causis*, whereas the kabbalists are rather interested in the result, the mouth of the river, in keeping with the fluvial metaphor. Ideologically, Kabbalah does not need the *Liber de causis*, and not even negative theology, but is ready to use it for apologetic purposes, to defend *ad extra* its ineffable contents.

As Franz Rosenzweig,[88] who reflected with lucidity on Jewish apologetics,[89] in his metaphysics once remarked: "About God we know nothing. But this not-knowing is a not-knowing about God".[90] The analogy with 'Azrie'l's way of speaking, if not of thinking, becomes clear a few sentences further: "God could no longer be defined, therefore, other than by his totally undefinable nature. This way that leads from a found something to the nothing at the end of which

87 Cfr. Scholem 1970b.

88 Concerning the hypothetical role of Kabbalah in Rosenzweig's thought, see Idel 1988, updated in Idel 2010, p. 159–167; Harvey 1987; Lucca 2012, p. 1–6 (text), 7–19 (introduction).

89 Rosenzweig 1923.

90 Rosenzweig 1921, p. 32: "Von Gott wissen wir nichts. Aber dieses Nichtwissen ist Nichtwissen von Gott"; English translation (by Barbara E. Galli) in Rosenzweig 2005, p. 32.

atheism and mysticism can shake hands is not the way we are taking; we are instead taking the way leading from the nothing to the something".[91] But even if one is firmly decided to take the descending path, from Nought to Being, the Nought, as its cause, pervades Being. The authentic reception of the *Liber de causis* in Kabbalah seems to escape philological examination, since Kabbalah, by its very nature, could only quote it as a convenient analogy found in external, i.e. non Jewish, thought but, in a constructive way, would absorb its aphorisms only by effacing their traces and effectively dissolving them.

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91 Rosenzweig 1921, p. 32: "(...) Gott also bestimmbar wurde nur in seiner völligen Unbestimmbarkeit. Diesen Weg, der von einem vorgefundenen Etwas zum Nichts führt und an dessen Ende sich Atheismus und Mystik die Hand reichen können, beschreiten wir nicht, sondern den entgegengesetzten vom Nichts zum Etwas".

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